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November 2002

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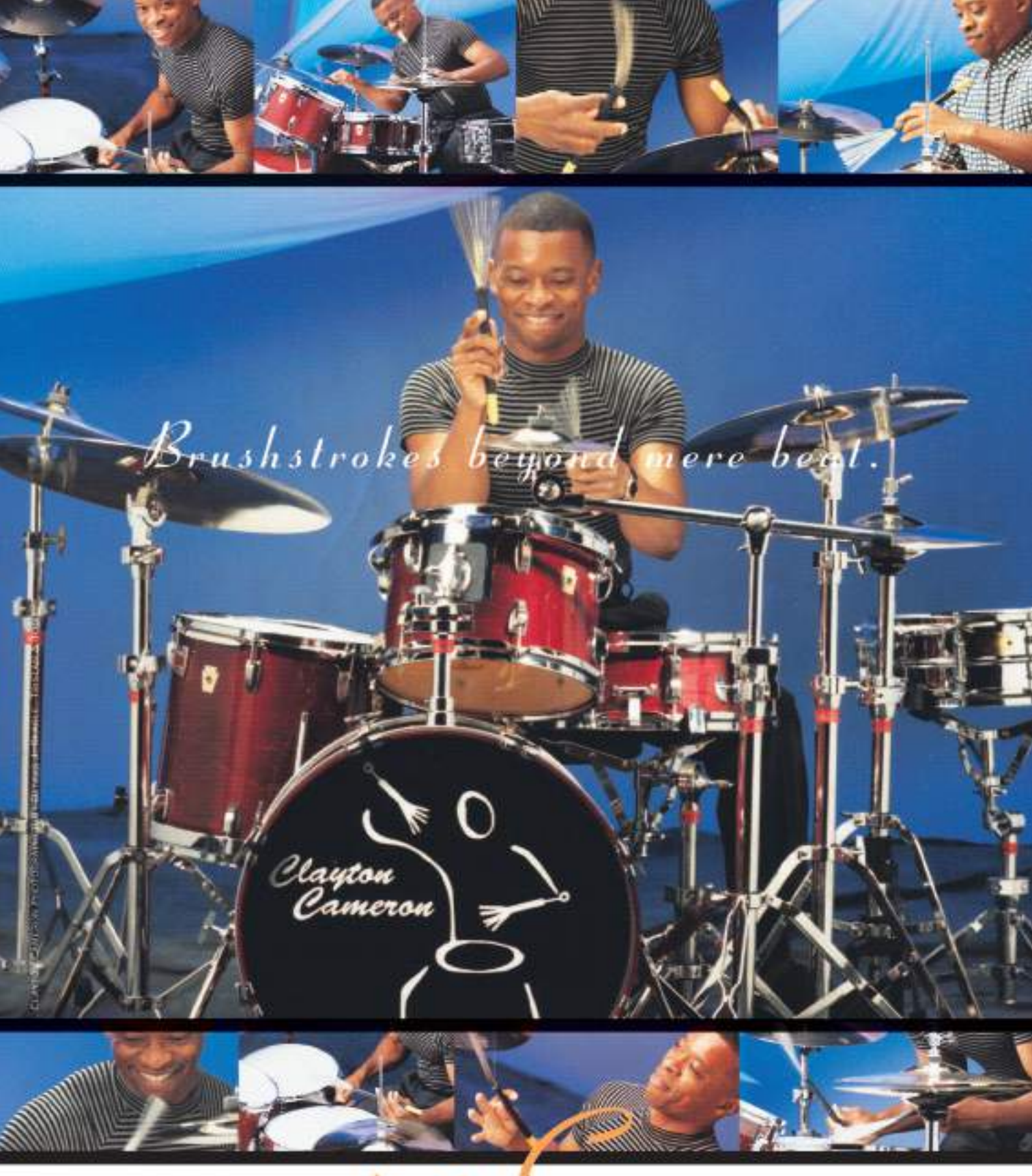

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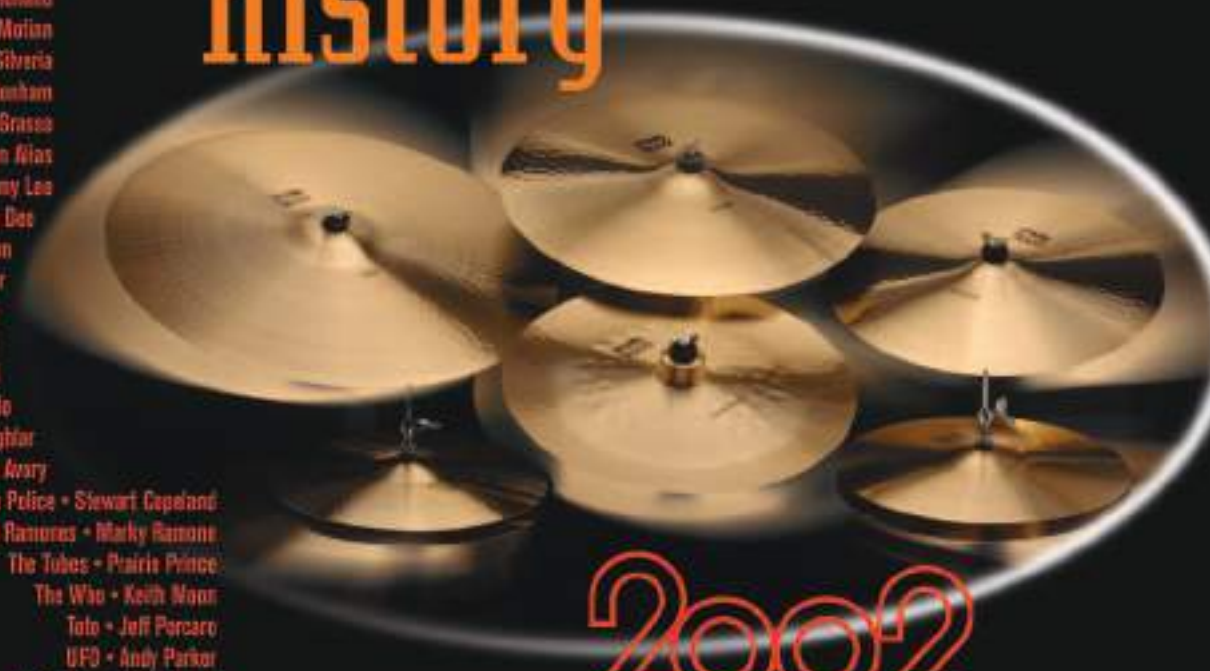

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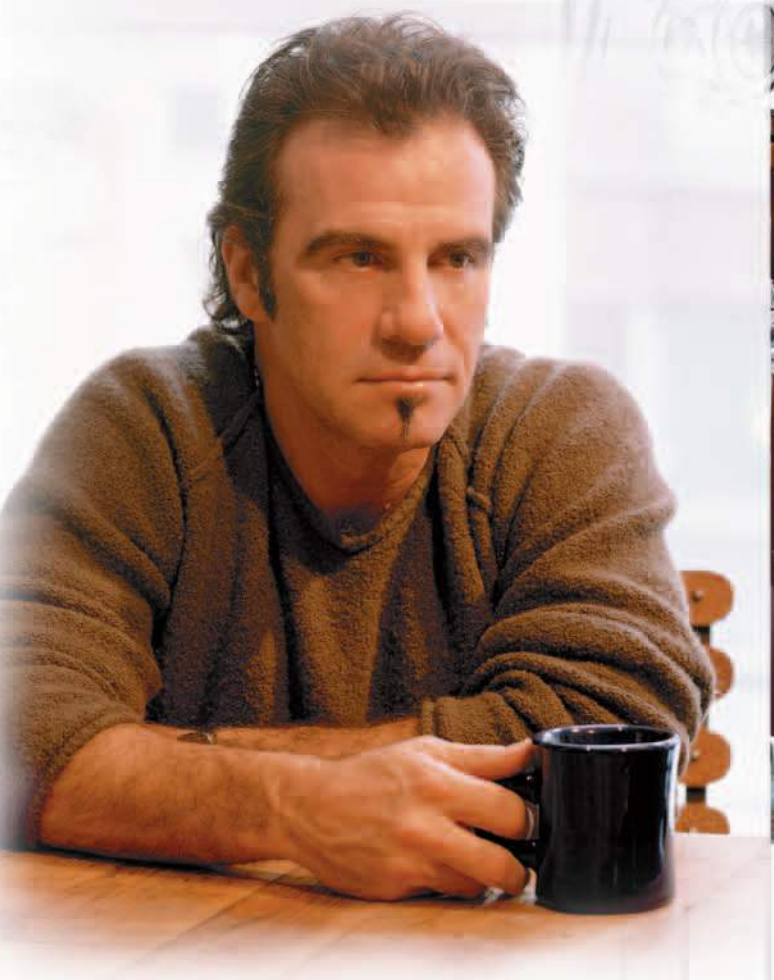

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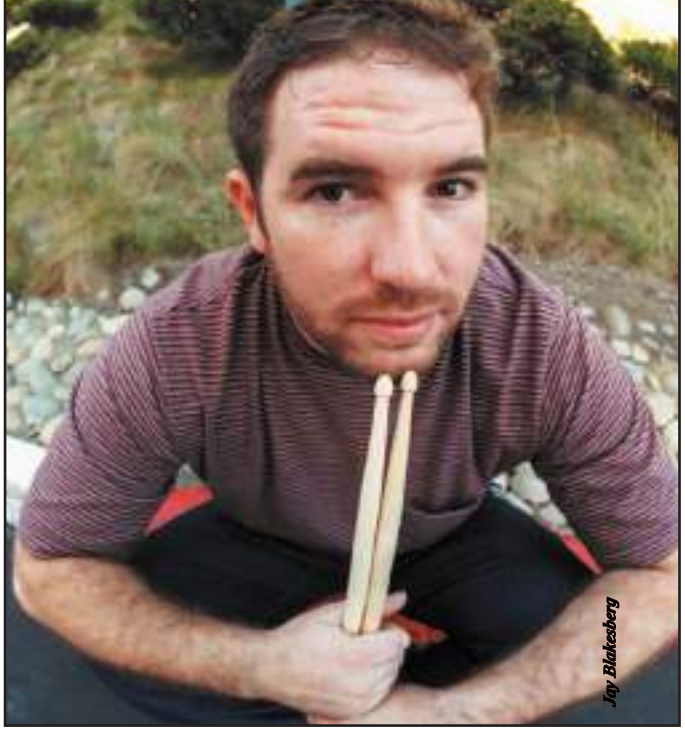

JIMMY EATS WORLD'S
ZACH LIND

Yeah, they're pure pop, all the way. But don't be fooled. Jimmy Eat World invests their catchy gems with more than a little depth, starting right with the rock-solid but intriguing drumming of Zach Lind.
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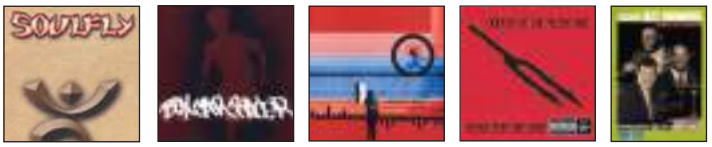

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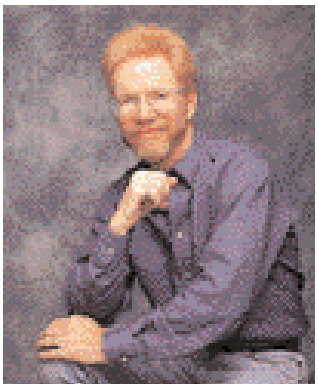


Into The Woods

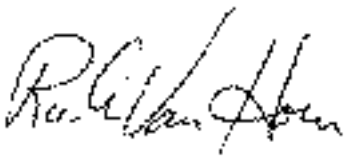
By the time you read this, summer will be over, and temperatures may be cooling off where you are. But as I write it, New Jersey is sweltering under a mid-summer heat wave. Normally that wouldn't be a subject for an *MD* editorial. But it just so happens that for the first time in many years, I'm doing an outdoor gig. And I'm learning all over again what that entails.

I'm playing drums and percussion for a production of Steven Sondheim's *Into The Woods*. Appropriately, the show is being presented *in* the woods—on an outdoor stage in a local county park. Our "orchestra pit" is actually a concrete slab in front of the elevated stage. We're in full view of the audience—and in full contact with the elements.

Thus far, that "contact" has included baking in the sun during afternoon rehearsals, having the wind turn the pages of my music at inappropriate times, and being swarmed by gnats and mosquitoes attracted to my stand light after dark. We haven't been rained on yet, but summer thunderstorms are common around here, so it's only a matter of time.

Because our "pit" is an unsecured area, I have to set up and break down for every performance. My drums sound somewhat wimpy to me in the open air. And I burned my fingers at the end of the last rehearsal when I touched a cymbal that had become hot enough to fry eggs.

The thing is...I'm really having a lot of fun! Call me crazy, but I'm enjoying the challenge and the change to my regular playing routine. Besides, I figure if I can live through the experience, I'll have a great tale to add to my collection of "war stories." So this afternoon I'll pack up my drums, my sunscreen, my mosquito repellent, and my umbrella, and head for the woods. The show must go on!



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Mike Malinin

Thanks a lot for your August cover story on Mike Malinin. He may not play the busy patterns of Carter Beauford or Mike Portnoy, but his drumming is still unique and readily identifiable. And the Goo Goo Dolls' music would definitely *not* be the same without him. To me, that's the definition of a great drummer.

Frank Arlington
Louisville, KY

I have nothing against Mike Malinin or the Goo Goo Dolls. However, I find fault with Mike's story being the cover feature.

Historically, *MD* has done an excellent job at featuring the icons of the drumming world both past and present. The cover story should be the embodiment of all the great things drumming is. I don't want to see someone whose band sold a lot of CDs or is popular right now. I want to read about cats who have shaped the industry by their unique and creative contributions. I don't think Mike Malinin falls into that category yet.

Chris Houdart
via Internet

Matt's Improv Playhouse

I could really relate to Matt Wilson's "Improv Playhouse" article in your August issue. I purchased a custom kit last year. A few months later I decided to quit the band I was in, in order to get to know my new drumset better. The guys in the band were disappointed and didn't understand exactly what I meant. But then, none of them knew about drums.

Several months later they called to see how I was doing and ask if I was interested in coming back. I *was* interested, and I came back playing even better. I had actually needed that time to get acquainted, one-on-one, with my entire kit.

Larry Rios
via Internet

Tipbook Review

Thanks for the kind words regarding *Tipbook: Drums* in your August *Critique* department. It is true, as the reviewer stated, that the format of the *Tipbook* series might give the impression that the books are geared mainly toward beginning players. They do feature easily accessible information, short sentences and paragraphs, and many diagrams. Upon closer reading, however, even experienced players can find lots of new stuff inside, including answers to questions they might be embarrassed to ask this late in their careers.

Upon reading a copy of *Tipbook: Drums*, Adam Nussbaum sent us this message: "I loved that book. I knew some of the info in there, but I actually learned some things as well. It has something for everyone. You *can* teach some old dogs new tricks."

Hugo Pinksterboer
The Tipbook Company
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Jeff Porcaro

It is appropriate that you devoted a good portion of your August issue to Jeff Porcaro for the tenth anniversary of his passing. We miss him greatly. I am thankful that we have his recordings to listen to for inspiration. Thanks very much for the story.

Jack Sheldon Jr.
Mesa, AZ

I had an opportunity to see Jeff with Toto in 1987, at Ontario Place in Toronto. The circular stage there rotated slowly while the band played, so I was able to witness Jeff's drumming prowess from every angle. What really caught my attention was when his back was to me. Even while playing all-out, he looked like he was barely moving at all. Such a master...always in control. After the concert, Jeff was gracious enough to chat with me and to offer some advice. He was a first-class musician in every sense.

Rod Saint-Denis
Sudbury, Ontario, Canada

Jeff Porcaro's contributions to popular drumming are almost immeasurable. I vividly remember sitting in my car before going into the house just to hear the groove on "Rosanna" all the way until the end. Jeff and I were born in the same year, so we were the same age when he died. I've lived a lot in the ensuing ten years, which serves to remind me how terrible it is that he died so young.

Paul D'Angelo
Herndon, VA

The details included in your tribute to Jeff make it a very rare article. Not only did you touch on a great musician, but on a loving father and family man as well.

Although Jeff is sorely missed, every time a drummer plays, there is some Jeff Porcaro in that beat. I'm sure Jeff is looking down and smiling wide, as he always did.

Dave Betti
Ventura, CA

I didn't know Jeff well, but we met and spoke on the phone a number of times when I lived in LA in the 1980s while working for Simmons and DW. He was always warm and gracious. The last time I spoke with him was at Winter NAMM in 1992. He came by the Zildjian booth, and I reintroduced myself. Jeff probably didn't really remember me, but he gave me a big hug anyway, and we chatted for a few minutes. It was a great feeling.

Many of us saw Jeff perform for the last time at the Remo party that evening. It was pure magic. Today, there's always at least one CD in my car's changer with Jeff on it.

Thanks to Robyn Flans for capturing the true spirit of someone who meant so much, and is missed by so many. At times I found myself laughing out loud, and at other times feeling very sad. Thanks, also, to *MD* for such a timely article. It's still hard to believe it's been ten years.

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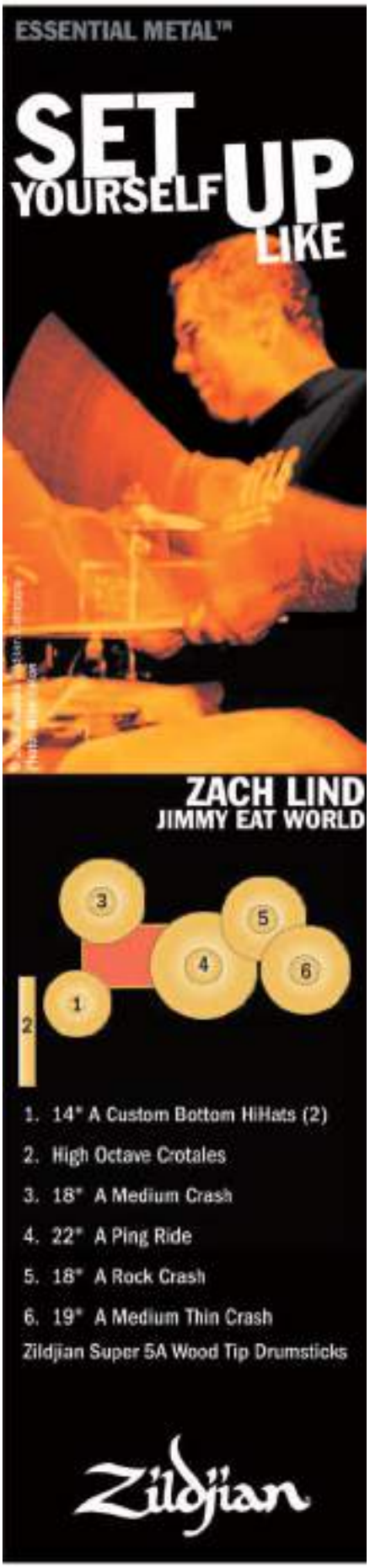

Elvin Opens The Door

Elvin Jones has always been my man. At sixteen, armed with my fake I.D., I caught the creator of those polyrhythms many times when he was playing with Coltrane, at Shelly's Manne Hole in Hollywood. That was in the early 1960s.

In the late 1990s, I saw Elvin at the Jazz Bakery—and he was still burnin'. I cautiously gave him a copy of my autobiography (*Riders On The Storm*), and told him that I wrote in it that he gave me my hands. I was worried about his judging me for turning into a "rock" drummer. Fortunately, he was very gracious.

It was an honor to carry his cymbal case to his car.

John Densmore
The Doors
Los Angeles, CA

Building Your Own Drumkit

Judging by the first installment in your August issue, Paul Bielewicz's drum-building series looks like it's going to be cool. However, one aspect of Paul's description merits some special comment—namely, cutting bearing edges. This is something that I do pretty frequently in my own shop, and it's important that your readers be aware of the dangers involved.

To be honest, routing is just a small part of a great bearing edge. The rest is hand work. Still, imagine the mess that a 2¼ horsepower machine whipping an ultra-sharp bit at 25,000 RPM can do. It would literally vaporize a finger or hand! With this in mind, you might actually want to dissuade your readers from trying this operation at home, purely in the interest of safety.

Mark Ross
MRP Custom Drums/EdgeWorks
Valley Stream, NY

Editor's Note: Your point is well taken. In fact, Paul Bielewicz did state in his article that the cutting of bearing edges (as well as snare beds) is an operation best left to professionals. He recommended that shells be ordered with the edges pre-cut, which is the way he ordered his. Modern Drummer *seconds that recommendation.*

The Musical Drummer

I'm a percussion major at Ball State University, and I've been using Ron Spagnardi's *Musical Drummer* articles to help me study music theory. I strongly suggest that you compile the articles into a book so that students can have an all-in-one reference source.

Andrew Klein
via Internet

Editors note: Ron's entire sixteen-part Musical Drummer *series will be available in book form in the spring of 2003.*

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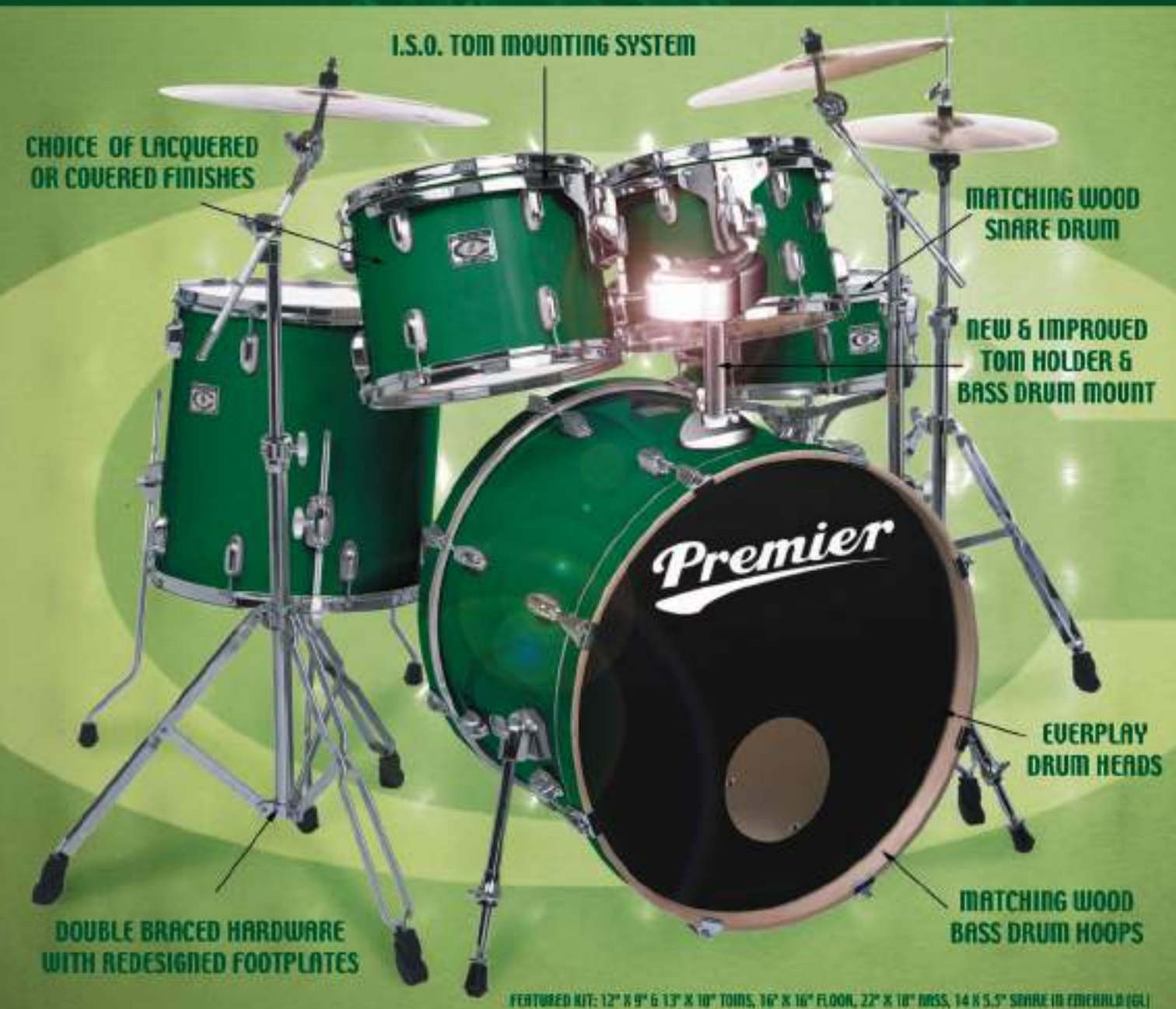

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Larry Mullen Jr. On Muffling And More

Q I'm a sixteen-year-old drummer, and I'm probably your biggest fan in the drumming community. I saw you play on the *Elevation* tour last year, and while I've been to many concerts, none came close to the show you and your U2 bandmates put on.

I have three questions. First, what kind of muffling do you use in your bass drum? Second, what drummers were inspirations to you when you first started out? Third, how much practicing do you do when you're not in the studio or touring?

Thanks for keeping rock 'n' roll sounding the way it should for the past twenty years. You've proved repeatedly that passion and emotion go a long way.

Christian Hayden
via Internet

A Thanks very much for all your kind words. Let me answer your questions in order. First, I use different types of muffling on the road and in the studio. In the studio I'll use pillows, blankets, duvet covers, or any other form of bedding. On the road I use foam on the inside of the bass drum shell.

As far as drummers who inspired me go, I'm a child of the '70s. Mo Tucker [Velvet Underground], Cozy Powell, Bill Fifield [Legend], Peter Phipps [Glitter Band] ...these were my heroes in those days. I also knew the names of the greats from the '50s and '60s. I *also* knew that I didn't want to—or wasn't gifted enough—to play like them, so I started my own band.

Finally, with regard to practicing when I'm not in the studio or touring: To be honest, I have either *been* in a studio or on the road virtually full-time for the past twenty years. I dedicate the rare times when I'm not in one of those two situations to non-drumming activities.

Richie Hayward Rings Out

Q Your in-the-pocket drumming and New Orleans second-line beats have always been an inspiration for me. A few years back you laid down some awesome funk/blues on Buddy Guy's *Heavy Love* CD. I especially love the sound of the snare drum: ringy as all get-out! What type and size of drum did you use on those sessions?

Dave Tarr
Baltimore, MD

A Thank you for your kind comments. On those sessions, which were done in Nashville, I was using rental gear from Harry McCarthy's Drum Paradise. Harry always sends me an assortment of snares. The snare drum in question is one of my all-time favorites. It's a beat-up-looking 1920s Ludwig 3x14 brass model with tube lugs—the kind of snare drum on which you need a rubber band to hold the strainer tight. As you say, the drum has a ring that's ugly as all get-out. But I just can't resist it!

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Scat Drumming From Phil Collins

Q I'm a long-time fan of your drumming and extensive musical accomplishments. I could ask countless questions, but there are three things I'm particularly curious about. First, on "Saturday Night And Sunday Morning" from the *But Seriously* album, how was the section of the intro from the horn lead-in to your fill into the groove counted? Second, how long before starting a tour do you usually rehearse a live show? And third, what are your current touring and/or recording plans?

Eric Cowsill
Rochester Hills, MI

A As always, I'm so pleased to get drumming questions. People forget that that's what I am really!

"Saturday Night And Sunday Morning" was recorded as follows. I played alone with a headset microphone on and "scat-sang" whatever I felt. I phrased the drums accordingly. Tom Tom 84, who did my horn arrangements back then, transcribed what I sang, and the guys played it! It was an experiment, really, but it did used to baffle a few people.

Regarding rehearsals for tours: We usually allow about six weeks. Three are for the music, and three are for the production (lights and out-front sound). However, the band is usually ready after two days, and we sit around and tell jokes for the rest of the time.

At present I have no plans to tour. But a new CD of my songs should be out towards the end of the year.

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A Classic Quote From MD's Past

"Drummers have to do all they can to make the songs they play sound great, not just the drum parts. A million amazing drummers have come and gone, but people will always remember a great song."

System Of A Down's **John Dolmayan**, September 2001

Alex Solca

Would you like to ask your favorite drummer a question?

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How To Transcribe Drum Parts

Q I have a question regarding *MD* transcriptions, such as Danny Carey's solo in the March 2002 issue. Do the transcriptions come from the process of elimination by using a giant EQ board and eliminating non-drum frequencies? Or better yet, do they come from the pre-mix studio tracks? I have difficulty transcribing parts such as those that Ted Kirkpatrick plays on Tourniquet's *Pathogenic Ocular Dissonance*. Do you have any advice for transcribing from such a CD?

M. Steele
Fort Myers, FL

A Although either of the mechanical methods you suggest would probably be helpful if available, neither is used by the writers who submit transcriptions to *MD*. The fact is, our transcriptions are created "the old-fashioned way" by a qualified individual listening to and studying the tracks, using a trained ear. Some of our transcribers have tape players that allow the tracks to be slowed down for easier study, but that's the extent of any mechanical aid being used.

On a few occasions we have run excerpts of tracks that were submitted by the artists who played them. Such excerpts have usually appeared in "sidebars" to feature stories on those artists. The artists might have had access to the unmastered drum tracks. Or, of course, they might simply have remembered what they played in the first place. But these are the exceptions to the rule.

Our advice for creating transcriptions is to do a lot of them, so that you get better at hearing the nuances and expression within each track. Also, one "trick" we recommend is to focus on individual kit "voices." Transcribe only the bass drum part for a measure. Then do the snare drum, the hi-hat, and so on. Don't try to "hear" all of the instruments at once. With practice, it will become easier for you to hear and understand even complicated drum patterns.

Bass Drum Sizes

Q Many old (and especially vintage) drumkits seem to have bass drums with shallow depths but rather large diameters. For example, a 14x24 seems to have been very common for many years. Why is this so?

Schuyler Orr
via Internet

A The answer to your question has a lot to do with the history of the drumset. The first "drumkits" were put together by the jazz drummers of New Orleans in the early part of the 20th century. About the same time, Vaudeville pit drummers also realized that one drummer could cover bass-drum and snare-drum parts if he or she played a pedal-operated bass drum.

The dimensions of the drums those players employed were dictated by the sizes available at the time. Since marching bass drums were designed to be loud and low for outdoor projection, they had to be pretty big in diameter. Ditto for concert bass drums that had to fill large halls with no amplification. But in order to be carried by a marching drummer, or to be played by a concert drummer who had to be able to reach around the instrument, the drums could not be particularly deep. So you'd find 12" to 14" depths, but quite large diameters (more so with concert drums than with marching drums). Drums of 26" to 36" in diameter were common, and some were even larger.

Those were the drums available to the drummers who created the first drumkits. Later, as bass drums began to be specifically designed for use on drumkits, it became obvious that lower bass drums would allow "traps" and tom-toms to be mounted where they could be more easily reached by the drummer. So bass drums began to get smaller in diameter. This was a gradual process, however, and from the 1930s to the early 1950s (the big band era) you'd commonly find drums from 24" to 28" in diameter, and usually from 12" to 14" in depth.

When bebop hit in the mid-1950s, small groups became popular. The big band–sized bass drums were just too loud and boomy for the new musical style. (They also didn't fit well on the stages of the tiny jazz clubs of the day.) These factors led to bass drums being further reduced in size, to 22", 20", and even 18" in diameter. Depths tended to remain at 14" during this period.

When the rock era boomed in the '60s, drummers soon discovered that they needed more power and projection to compete with amplified guitars. So bass drums started to grow again. First they grew in diameter. Although 22" became a standard size (and still is), drums of 24" became common, and some larger drums were used by specific artists (like John Bonham, who used a 26" drum). Again, the depth stayed a standard 14".

However, drummers once again were bothered by the fact that bigger drums put toms and cymbals up higher. So in the 1980s, drum designers began to experiment with the depth-vs.-diameter ratio. Instead of a 14x24 bass drum, how about a 16x22? This concept proved popular, and gradually the 16" depth became increasingly prevalent. By the end of the 20th century, it had taken over as the standard depth for most bass drums. As we enter the 21st century, drums with 18" depths have become popular, reflecting a never-ending quest by manufacturers to provide improved sounds (and to be different from their competition).

Pipe Band Snare Edges

Q Your August issue article about building your own drumset caught my eye. I'm not interested in constructing my own kit, but some of the ideas expressed by the author seemed applicable to other drums. For example, I play in a pipe band, and I'm the designated "tuning guru" for the snare line. We play the new Pearl pipe band snare models, and I must say it's been very enjoyable tuning them. However, a double 45° bearing edge seems like it would make a lot of sense on the bottom of the shell, because the bottom head is where most of the tone is coming from. My question is: Can this concept be applied to the Pearl pipe band snares, and if so, how would I go about altering them?

Andrew Finley
via Internet

A We referred your question to Pearl product manager Gene Okamoto (who also happens to be a grade 4 side drummer

Marco Minnemann

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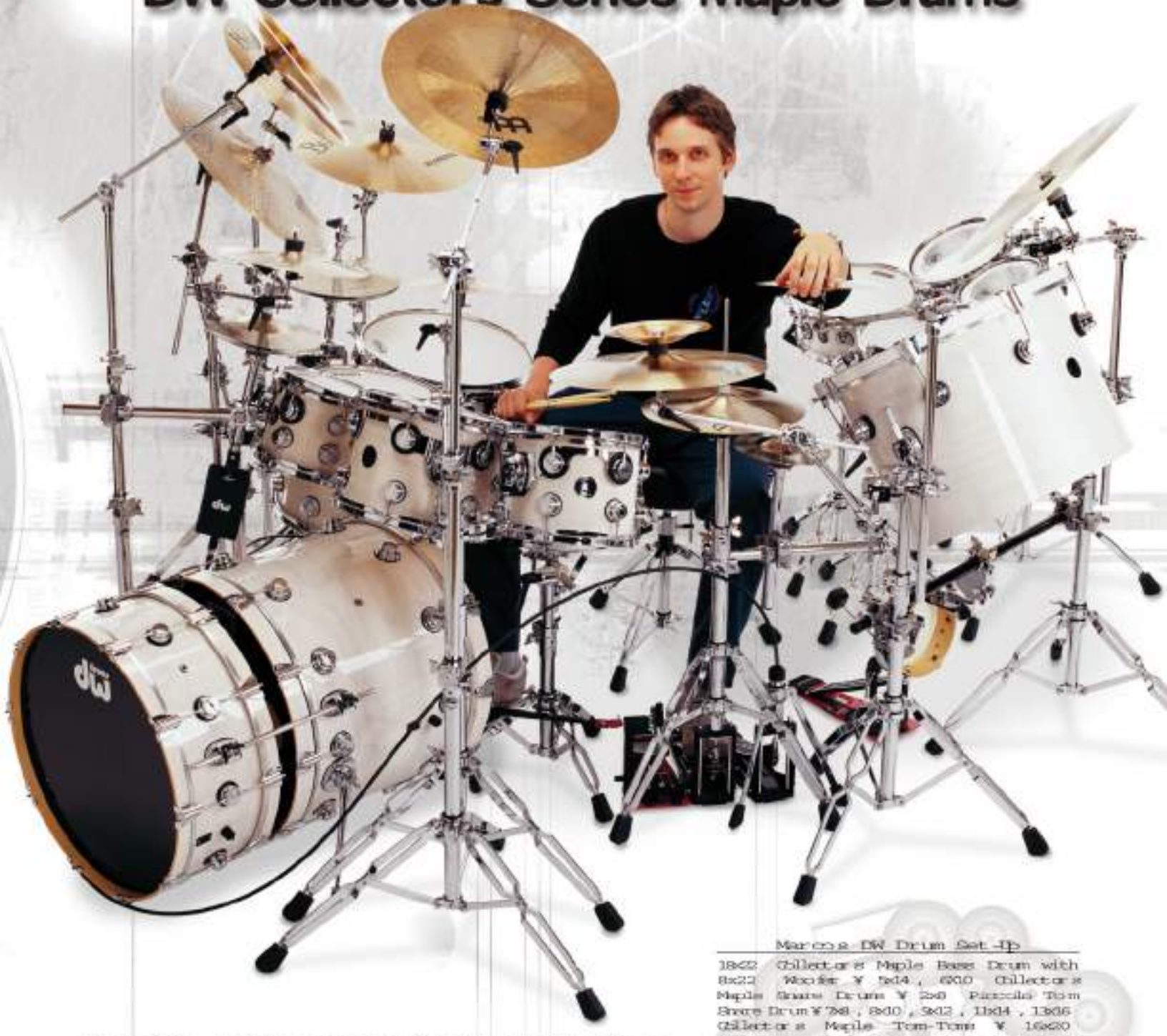

Much like another famous German import, Marco Minneman s reputation is built on speed, precision and power. His in-the-pocket playing behind artists like Paddy Kelly, Paul Gilbert, Illegal Aliens and Nena has grooved concert audiences while his awe-inspiring technique has thrilled drummers in clinics, videos and books. With an abundance of the talent and energy to fuel both his mainstream and extreme drumming performances, Marco may just be the Ultimate Drumming Machine.

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with The Nashville Pipes & Drums). Here's his reply: "The double 45° bearing edge *can* be applied to your pipe snare drum by any qualified custom shop. However, this type of bearing edge is more for drumset applications, where, because of the thickness of the heads used on toms and the batter side of the snare, it's important for the point of the bearing edge to contact the flat part of the head before it curves into the flesh hoop. Snare-side heads, on the other hand, are much thinner and can conform to almost any shape of bearing edge. Thus, in terms of head contact, the difference between a double 45° cut and the straight 45° cut of our pipe drum would really be insignificant.

"Personally I don't feel that re-cutting the snare bearing edges on your Pearl pipe drum is worth the time or effort. Besides that, doing so will void the warranty."

Avoiding Blisters

Q I've been drumming for eight years, and I have a continuing problem. Any time I go through a practice session with my band or play a three-hour-long concert, the index and middle fingers on both my hands get blisters. I've tried some medical tape, but it just falls off. I don't like to wear gloves. What do you suggest?

Tim Copsey
via Internet

A We get this question a *lot*, so everybody take notes!

Blisters are usually the result of friction caused by gripping the sticks too tightly. Drummers grip their sticks too tightly for a variety of reasons. The most common reason is tension or strain. It's the same principle that causes you to hold your breath and "work harder" to try to play a difficult or very fast passage. The muscles tighten up when you do that, and you actually can't play nearly as well. The key to eliminating this particular problem is to play in a relaxed manner, using proper breathing and a fairly loose grip.

In order to facilitate that loose grip, you have to use a stick of the proper size. Very often, blisters can result from trying to play too hard with a too-small or too-light stick. A stick with a larger diameter is easier to grip, and usually is heavier as well. That extra weight can be helpful in terms of the stick doing some of the work *for* you if you need extra power.

If you don't need power or volume but still want the grip benefits of a larger stick, consider trying a maple model. Maple is lighter than hickory, so you can play with a "fatter" stick that won't necessarily be heavier than what you're used to.

If after trying some of these suggestions you still need to cushion your sticks to prevent blisters, try Pro-Mark Stick-Rapp tape, which is a gripping aid that also provides a certain amount of cushioning effect. Or consider sticks that come with rubberized grip areas, such as those from Uni-Grip 2000.

Replacing Conga Heads

Q I work in a small music store in Pembroke, Ontario, Canada. Someone brought a conga into the shop for a head replacement. We ordered a goatskin head from our supplier. Unfortunately, despite more than twenty years' experience as a drummer and drum salesman, I have no idea how to go about replacing a head on a conga. Any help you could provide would be much appreciated.

Jim Weese
Bob's Music Plus
Pembroke, Ontario, Canada

A Latin Percussion, Inc. customer service specialist Federico Perez replies, "To begin with, a goatskin is not well suited for a conga. It's too thin a head and will easily rip under the hands of a conga player. Our LP hand-picked conga heads are made out of water buffalo hide, which is a much tougher and more resilient material.

"The first thing you have to do is find the head size. With LP congas it's very easy. There is a small badge by the handle of the drum that tells you the model: quinto, conga, or tumbadora. You can also remove the head and look for writing on the inside of the drum. For example, a Galaxy/Giovanni quinto will say LP274A on the inside of the drum. This refers to the model number of the replacement head.

"If your customer does not have an LP conga, the most accurate way to measure for head size is to remove the old head and rim and measure across the top of the drum. The attached pictures show an 11" quinto. If your customer's drums are not LP, he or she may have to tuck their own head. We have Flatskins (blanks) available, and we can provide instructions on how to tuck your own head."

Editor's note: there's also the option to use one of the fine synthetic conga heads made by Remo and Evans.

The Black Page

Q I'm interested in sheet music for "The Black Page Drum Solo #1" and "The Black Page Drum Solo #2" by Frank Zappa. I have searched but have not been able to find these musical wonders. If you could tell me where I could buy this music, I would be much obliged.

Larry Lubomski
via Internet

A Some Frank Zappa transcripts for drums, including "The Black Page," are available online from Barfko-Swill, at www.zappa.com, the official Zappa Web site.

Fibes SFT Snare Drum

Q As a fan of acrylic drums, I found Jim DeRogatis's article in your April 2002 issue very interesting. In that article, Mr. DeRogatis mentions Buddy Rich's use of what he called a Fibes SFT snare. Could you provide some background on that drum, including what "SFT" stands for? I

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know Fibes made fiberglass and acrylic drums. But I cannot decipher "SFT" with that information alone.

Rick Petrilli
Boston, MA

A Fibes' Stacy Robertson provides the following information. "The SFT snare drum was developed in 1966/1967. It features a very articulate strainer that allows the drum to pick up every little note. This is, in part, why artists like Buddy Rich, Alan Dawson, and Billy Cobham played and raved about it. On the other hand, because it is so sensitive, the SFT is not an ideal strainer for hard hitters.

"The acrylic SFT drum is still available today through Fibes Drum Co. In addition, we now offer the SFT strainer on maple drums as well.

"The acronym 'SFT' does, in fact, have a specific meaning. However, that meaning was created by the drum's designers—Bob Grauso and John Moreno—as an inside joke. And it has remained so for more than thirty years. When the time is right, we will release the information and expose the joke. For now, the drum must simply remain the SFT, with no explanation."

Mystery Paiste Traditional Ride

Q I've just purchased a used Paiste 20" Traditional Medium Light Ride. I'm curious about it, because, while it sounds like a Paiste Traditional, it has silk-screened logos on it that I've never seen on a Traditional series cymbal. They include a small Paiste Signature logo on top, and a large outlined Paiste logo on the bottom. It's missing the etched Paiste Signature logo on the top. The serial number appears to be 01071944 or 01871944. (The lathing runs through some of the number.) Can you pinpoint what sort of Traditional model I have, and how old it is?

Cary Hitsman
via Internet

A According to Steve Riskin of Paiste's artist relations/customer service department, the serial number indicates that your cymbal was manufactured sometime in 2001. Paiste used to etch the Paiste logo into the Traditional line of cymbals, but soon found that the cymbals tended to crack more at the etching. Eventually they opted for the small silkscreen logo on top and the block lettering silkscreen on the bottom of the cymbals.

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Steven Gillis

Filter's Power Source

Steven Gillis was five when he stumbled upon a drumset in a neighbor's basement, discovering the instrument that would become his life's passion. "I started banging on these drums and it just *zapped* me," he admits. "I knew from that point I'd be playing for the rest of my life. Since college, I've made my living solely playing music. I've never had a day job."

Gillis, who counts Tony Williams and Dennis Chambers among his biggest influences, was playing over three hundred gigs a year in various Chicago-based jazz bands when he joined alternative hard rockers Filter on the verge of recording their second album. Five years later, Filter are touring in support of their latest release, *Amalgamut*.

Because they're from Chicago, home of the industrial-minded Wax Trax studio, and because vocalist Richard Patrick once worked with Nine Inch Nails, Filter often gets rubber-stamped an industrial band. But Gillis insists this label is misleading. "Maybe the first album had an industrial flavor," he concedes, "but the press puts that stamp on us because it's easy, not because it's true. Listen to the records: There's great songwriting in this band.

"I don't think that there's any song on *Amalgamut* that's heavy just for the sake of being heavy," Gillis continues. "'So I Quit' is our ode to Ministry and is fun to play live. But on every other tune there's something being said. It's not fluff at all; we're trying to write songs that people can have their own relationship with and interpret in different ways. We do what we feel is necessary musically to represent the song."

As a way of discounting any preconceived notions that he might be relying on tapes or programming, Steve simply challenges skeptics to see Filter in concert. "Filter has always been a band with 'electronic window dressing,' I like to say, but I change things around every show. I don't play fills exactly like the record, and I'm as 'live' as drummers get. Some bands have a lot of drums on tape, but that's not Filter *at all*. When I drop out, maybe there's a loop or something going, but you know when it's the drums. We're a rock band, straight up."

Gail Worley

Mark Zonder
Warlord Warning

After releasing seven albums with progressive rockers Fates Warning, drummer Mark Zonder is taking a step *backwards*, reuniting with guitarist Bill Tsamis to resurrect their early '80s metal trio, Warlord. *Rising Out Of The Ashes* is a fitting title for the CD that represents Warlord's return to rock after a seventeen-year dormancy.

Warlord recorded only one full-length album and several singles ("packaged seventy different ways by the label," Mark jokes), but sold well and cultivated an intense overseas fan base. Unfortunately, they could never find the right singer, so Zonder and Tsamis eventually went their separate ways. "It was really tough," Mark admits. "I always thought Warlord could have been big."

In 2001, Zonder played Warlord's music for his wife, who urged him to reconnect with Tsamis and explore the possibility of creating new Warlord music. This time out, Tsamis had the perfect front man in mind: his friend Joacim Cans, vocalist for Swedish metal band HammerFall. "Joacim is this total Warlord fanatic," Mark says. "It just took one email and he was totally into it."

Rising was recorded in two weeks at Zonder's home studio on Long Island. With the record receiving great reviews in Europe and "hour-long television specials in Greece devoted to the band," Warlord intend to capitalize on that popularity, headlining Germany's Wacken Open Air 2002, a three-day heavy metal festival that draws crowds of up to forty thousand. With Cans now handling vocals, Wacken will also mark the new Warlord's debut as a live band.

"I think that I adapt to and play for the music," Mark says of his approach to playing metal versus progressive rock. "I'm not a guy who says, This is my style, where me playing a jazz tune is going to sound just like me playing a metal tune. I love big choruses, I love kick and snare, and the thing I like about the Warlord stuff is the solidness of it. It's been great playing this kind of music again—to not have to count everything, and just rock out."

Gail Worley

Mad At Gravity's

Jake Fowler

As if recording wasn't tough enough, imagine having to play drums with a bad cold and having your mouth covered with duct tape. Alas, that's where Mad At Gravity's Jake Fowler found himself while recording the band's debut release, *Resonance*. Turns out he has a tendency to grunt and groan while playing. Perhaps it was Fowler's early fascination with all things hard rock, from Led Zeppelin to Mötley Crüe to Deftones, that led to his overly audible playing style. Then again, maybe it's just because Fowler is passionate about drumming.

"I've been playing drums for about twenty years," Jake says, "in just about every type of band there is—rock, goth, nu-metal…all sorts of stuff." Bands such as Korn, Red Hot Chili Peppers, and Soundgarden dot his modern-day influences. But Fowler says that when he started to put this band together, he was looking for something different. "That stuff is really aggressive," Jake says, "but I kind of got that out of my system. I didn't want to have another nu-metal band this time around. I wanted to have a more timeless kind of rock band."

Mad At Gravity blends the best of driving rock and hooky pop with touches of odd time signatures. "Walk Away," the band's first single, is in three, "Burn" is in seven, and the tune "Historypeats" shifts between three different time signatures. Listeners might hear some Josh Freese influences on the album. "Probably a lot of that was because I was stealing Josh's work," Fowler admits with a laugh. "I stole the beginning thing that he does in A Perfect Circle's 'Judith' for 'Walk Away' because it's in three. I wasn't purposely trying to do it, I listened back and was like, Oh, *no*."

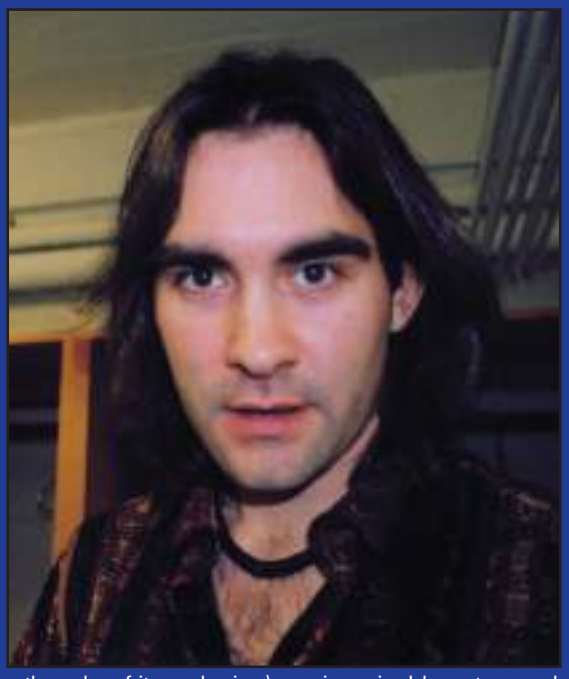
"Burn" offers Fowler the opportunity to expand on that approach. "It was a challenge to take a song in seven and make it groove," he reports. "But it was a lot of fun. People really respond to that one live, because I think it's a lot different from your average song."

And it's watching the audience's response that makes it all worthwhile for Fowler. "My favorite thing in the world is to play live, although I still get nervous as hell before I go on stage," he admits. "But there's nothing better than that feeling when you get done with your first song and people react to it. Even if it's ten people in front of you screaming their heads off, it's just such a rush to be able to do something that you love so much and have people react to it in a positive way."

David John Farinella

Ray Rizzo

Days Of The New



The first time Ray Rizzo played with Days Of The New, he felt that everything he had done previously had led him to that point. "I started out playing rock," Rizzo says. "But the music I was really into—drummers like Stewart Copeland and bands like Steely Dan—had been influenced by something other than rock music. So I grew very easily into playing jazz, and I found everything I needed and wanted through that discipline. But as I started developing my own style, I quit hearing distinctions between what was rock and what was jazz."

Ray first hooked up with Days Of The New as a percussionist, contributing to the band's second release, known as *Green*. (Each of their three albums is officially titled *Days Of The New*, but is distinguished by the color of its packaging.) Rizzo took over drumset duties for subsequent touring, and then did all of the drumming for the band's third release, *Red*. A tune from that album, "Die Born," was on the soundtrack of the movie *Black Hawk Down*. Rizzo also played on Days Of The New's version of "L.A. Woman" on The Doors tribute album *Stoned Immaculate*.

Rizzo says that Days Of The New leader Travis Meeks doesn't just count off a song and expect everyone to play the same part every night. "We definitely have parts worked out," Ray clarifies, "but it's a lot more loose. Some nights, Travis will do the first verse by himself acoustically, and from there we have to feel our way into the song. He's very expressive, and that's what I studied jazz to find: expressive players with an ear for a lot of styles."

When he's not out with Days Of The New, Rizzo still plays a lot of jazz in his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, with a group called Java Men. "When I go from being on the road with Days Of The New to doing a jazz gig, I have to spend some time reprogramming my brain on how to approach stuff," Ray says. "You can take different types of liberties from one group to the next. But whatever the situation, it's still about timekeeping, playing the tune, and pushing the band."

Rick Mattingly

Joe Lizama

Johnny Mathis's Subtle Support

Twenty years is a long time to work with one artist, but Joe Lizama has no complaints about his employer, Johnny Mathis. "He's a great singer," Lizama says, "he's a nice person to work for, and the check is in the bank every week. Plus Johnny's done it for a very long time, so he knows how to run the whole thing comfortably. We travel and work in great conditions."

Although Mathis has cut down his schedule a little in the last few years, a lot of work goes into the live shows. Normally, Mathis travels with a rhythm section and hires twenty-four other musicians wherever they travel, unless they're working with a symphony orchestra. "We get to the location," Joe explains, "and on the day of our first performance everything has to be set up. I set up my drums about an hour after the sound crew begins their set-up. On a typical schedule, we'll have a soundcheck at 1:00 in the afternoon and a three-hour rehearsal starting at 2:00. At the end of that, Johnny will come in, and if he chooses, he'll sing a couple of songs with the orchestra, or he'll let them go and rehearse with the rhythm section for as long as he needs to be comfortable. We'll take a dinner break and then be ready to do an 8:00 show."

Musically, Mathis needs a supportive drummer. "The lyric and voice are the most important aspects," Joe says. "If the tune is an uptempo song—he likes to sing sambas—it's up to me to lead the band, as far as having the orchestra listen to where the beat is. If it's a ballad, which Johnny is famous for, then it's a matter of being the backbone of the time. I also have to be subtle about the performance and allow the music to breathe and speak for itself."

Lizama enjoys the upbeat, samba material like "To The Ends Of The Earth" and "Brazil." "We do a version of Mancini's 'Charade' in 3/2," Joe says, "and I enjoy that as well. When I'm not playing something that's very challenging rhythmically, I still enjoy supporting the more melodic things and letting Johnny do what he does best."

Robyn Flans

Danny Frankel's Vibration Of Sound

Drummer/percussionist Danny Frankel lives in a world of sounds. His latest release, *The Vibration Of Sound* (Transparency), is a collage of organic percussion sounds. As he explains it, "I hike every morning and listen to things like hawks and woodpeckers. They are natural percussion."

The CD is a collection of moods generated by percussion and other instruments layered on top of tape loops and drones, which were inspired by his walks. "I had the idea of making percussion groove strongly, like a drumkit groove," Frankel says. "Tabla People" features drones and voices moving in and out of the various drums and bells. "Message From Another Planet" features an ethereal steel guitar and a slowly unfolding clarinet. Frankel layers various sounds on top, especially bongos. "Bongos are my favorite thing," he says. "I remember hearing them in '60s pop music and being intrigued by the sound of the high bongo. I often use bongos instead of a high tom when I gig."

Perhaps the album's most intriguing track is "The Birdcage." This is a "duet" between Danny and eleven Zebra finches. "I keep finches," he says. "I started with three, then had eleven, then twenty-two. They're psychedelic, and they have their own rhythms. One has a fast boogaloo beat, another an odd-time jazz beat." The birds' singing creates their own natural loops over which Frankel layered bongos, doumbek, djembe, conga, and metals. The interaction of the birds with percussion is startling and brings out the organic quality that Danny strives for.

Frankel has studied tabla, where he says he learned to "flirt with time." He also studied with jazz drumming icon Paul Motian. "He had great ideas and stressed being relaxed and open to the spirit," Danny says, "playing a piece differently every time." Frankel's busy schedule has found him working with such diverse artists as Laurie Anderson, Lou Reed, and Fiona Apple. "I'm open to anything," he asserts.

Michael Bettine

DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Yogi Horton was born on November 25, 1959.

Eric Carr passed away on November 24, 1991.

On November 20, 1973, **Keith Moon** collapses twice during The Who's performance in San Francisco. **Scot Halpin** (nineteen years old at the time) comes up from the audience and plays three songs with the group.

On November 26, 1983, **Frankie Banali** and VH1's number 7 Top-40 hair band, Quiet Riot, are the first heavy metal band to have a number-1 record on the *Billboard* album charts, with *Metal Health*.

The week of November 19, 1988, Bon Jovi (with **Tico Torres** on drums) becomes the first group in the '80s to have back-to-back albums reach number-1 and yield number-1 singles.

On November 21, 1995, the Beatles' *Anthology 1*, with **Ringo Starr** and **Pete Best** (who appears on ten tracks), sets a first-day sales record, moving 450,000 units.

Happy Birthday!

Roy Burns (November 30, 1935)
Billy Hart (November 29, 1940)
Pete Best (November 21, 1941)
Floyd Sneed (November 22, 1943)
Les DeMerle (November 4, 1946)
David Garibaldi (November 4, 1946)
Bev Bevan (November 25, 1946)
Alphonse Mouzon (November 21, 1948)
Tony Thompson (November 15, 1954)
Clem Burke (November 24, 1955)
Adam Nussbaum (November 29, 1955)
Matt Sorum (November 19, 1960)
Charlie Benante (November 27, 1962)
Mike Bordin (November 27, 1962)
Matt Cameron (November 28, 1962)
Rick Allen (November 1, 1963)
Travis Barker (November 14, 1975)

NEWS

Modern Drummer 2000 Undiscovered Drummer contest winner **Mike D'Angelo** recently played at New York City's Carnegie Hall with the Charlotte Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Bill Stewart is on new discs by Chris Potter, Scott Colley, and The Larry Goldings Trio.

Virgil Donati is on the new Ring Of Fire live CD and DVD, *Burning Live In Tokyo*. Virgil is also on the new Planet X release, *MoonBabies*.

Burnt By The Sun's **Dave Witte** performed with electronic artist Alec Empire's band. He will also undertake a North American tour starting this fall, playing drums for Japan's Melt Banana. Burnt By The Sun will continue to gig in the downtime between dates.

Ricky Sebastian has replaced Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez in Los Hombres Caliente. The group has been playing sold-out shows in Canada and the US, and are finishing work on their fourth album.

Jerry Marotta is on Mia Doi Todd's *The Golden State*.

Ian Prince is on Houston's *Head Like A Road Map*.

Chad Cromwell is on Amy Grant's latest, *Legacy...Hymns And Faith*.

Simon Wright is on Dio's latest, *Killing The Dragon*.

Stephen Belans has been playing dates with Kacy Crowley and Alejandro Escovedo, recording with Beaver Nelson, and teaching at the Austin Lyric Opera.

Kahil El'Zabar received the "Percussionist Of The Year" award from the Jazz Journalist Association. His new album, *Love Outside Of Dreams* (Delmark 541) was recently released.

Sam LaMonica and his band Joe Durso & Stone Caravan, an independent band based in New York, have been hired by Harley Davidson to be the house band for the company's upcoming 100th-anniversary festival. The festival will have stops in the US, Canada, and Mexico from July through the end of the year. Next year they plan on touring Australia, Japan, Spain, and Germany.

Johnny Fay is on The Tragically Hip's ninth album, *In Violet Light*.

Steve Hass is on tour with The Manhattan Transfer. He is also on new releases by Ravi Coltrane and Neshama Carlebach.

Marco Minnemann has just returned to Germany from Las Vegas, where he was recording Paul Gilbert's (ex Mr. Big) new solo album, *Burning Organ*. Currently Marco is on an extensive tour with German singer Nena.

Dave Allen has been on the road with Michelle Branch. Michelle and the band recently filmed a live DVD.

Billy "Thunder" Mason is in the studio with Tim McGraw and The Dance Hall Doctors, recording a new album due out the week of Thanksgiving. Billy will also be doing a CBS special and a DVD of Tim and band playing live.

Stephen Chopek is now playing with John Mayer.

Billy Cobham is on the reissue of Kenny Burrell's *God Bless The Child* along with percussionist **Ray Barretto**. Cobham is also on Deodato's *Deodato 2*, along with **Rick Marotta**.

Jim Stauffer is on tour with Silvercrush.

Steve Gadd is on the reissue of *Bad Benson* by George Benson, which has three previously unreleased tracks.

Billy Ashbaugh recently played a few dates with Pat Benatar before going back on the road with *NSYNC.

Dave DiCenso is touring with guitarist Johnny A. Congratulations to Dave on his recent engagement.

David Silveria and Korn recently began touring in support of their new album, *Untouchables*.

Gregg Bissonette has been doing some dates with James Taylor.

Dean Butterworth is on Rosey's *Dirty Child*.

Dave Ruffy is on Aztec Camera's compilation CD, *Knife*.

Mark Heaney is on drums with The Shining, whose recent US dates have heralded the fall release of their debut album, *True Skies*.

Mick Brown is on drums with Dokken, promoting their recently released album, *Long Way Home*.

Josh Freese has cut drum tracks for 3 Doors Down and also just finished the new Vandals album. In addition, Josh has started an exciting new project called Tapeworm, which includes both Maynard James Keenan (Tool/A Perfect Circle) and Trent Reznor (Nine Inch Nails) on vocals.

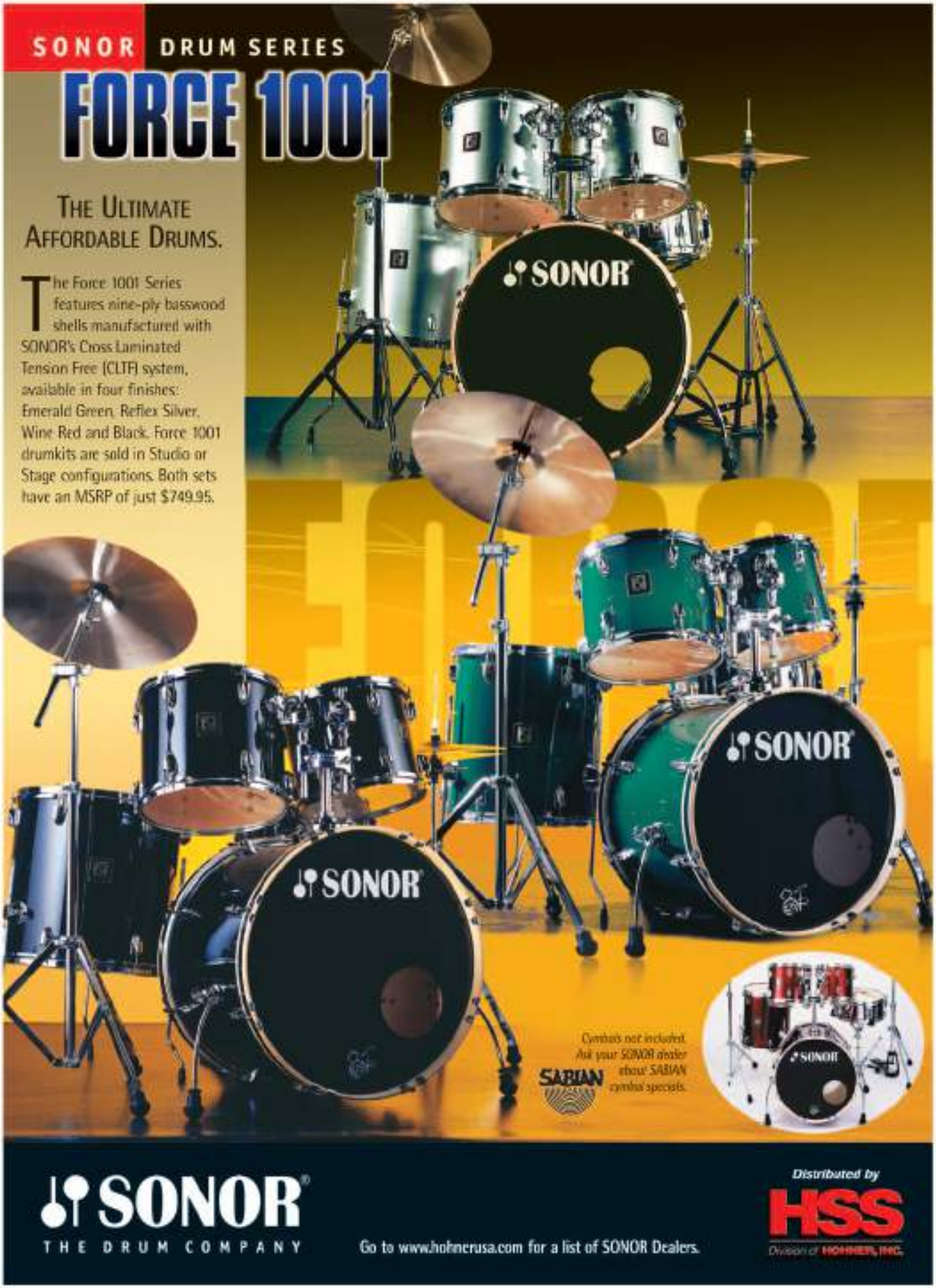
Paul Bostaph has begun tracking his drums for the upcoming Systematic album.

Joe Sirois can be heard on *A Jackknife To A Swan,* the latest album from The Mighty Mighty Bosstones.

BJ Barker and **Peter Luscombe** are on pop/country artist Kasey Chambers' *Barricades And Brickwalls*.

Brian Tichy is back out on the road with Billy Idol. Brian is also writing and recording with Derek Sherinian.

Rob Bueno is on The Buzzhorns' Atlantic Records debut, *Disconnected*.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Summer NAMM 2002!

Ironically, Nashville, Tennessee was cooler than *MD*'s New Jersey home this past July. But besides the lower temperature, what was *really* cool in Nashville were the goodies on display at the Summer NAMM show. New manufacturers, new products, and new ideas abounded. Here's a look at some of the show's highlights.

1 **Active** is a new brand of drums and hardware offering entry-level to professional kits at very attractive prices. Along with the pro-level Custom kit shown here, the line includes the Smooth Rider series of bass drum pedals. Y **(714) 593-9420.**

2 **Ahead Drumsticks**' new XL Rock series includes 16¼"–long Studio models with heavy-duty Delrin tips, along with 16¾"–long Concert models with shatter-proof tips.
Y **(818) 727-1127,** **www.bigbangdist.com.**

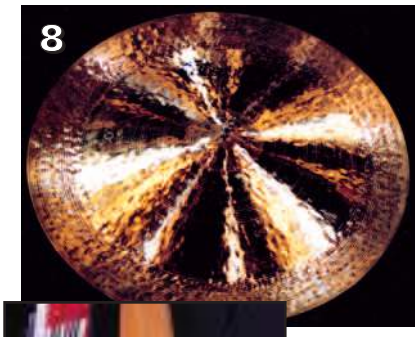
3 **Applied Microphone Technology**'s System 1 combines a versatile microelectronic microphone with a unique clamping system. It can be used on virtually any drum or percussion instrument.
Y **(908) 665-2727,** **www.appliedmic.com.**

4 Turkish-made **Anatolian** cymbals have been available in Europe since 1999. They made their US debut in Nashville, distributed by Active Music.
Y **(714) 593-9420,** **www.anatoliancymbals.com.**

5 The Chieftain Kevlar head for marching snare drums and a brand-new drumhead catalog were on display from **Aquarian**.
Y **(714) 632-0230,** **www.aquariandrumheads.com.**

6 The Artist Elite mic' series from **Audio-Technica** includes three new models. The AE2500 (left) is a dual-element, dynamic/condenser in a single housing, designed for optimal bass-drum miking. The AE5100 (center) is a large-diaphragm condenser tailored for overhead and hi-hat applications. The AE3000 condenser is designed to take very high sound pressure levels from toms, snares, and other percussion, while still delivering an uncolored performance.
Y **(330) 686-2600,** **www.audio-technica.com.**

7 The D6 bass drum mic' from **Audix** has a frequency response of 30 Hz 15 kHz and a cardioid pick-up pattern. It's designed to sound good in *any* position, without being dependent on finding the "sweet spot" of the drum. Black and brushed aluminum models are available. Y **(503) 682-6933,** **www.audixusa.com.**



8 A 22" China is the latest addition to Jeff Hamilton's signature Hammer Series from **Bosphorus.** With two rivets installed, it's designed to be played as a ride. Y **(770) 205-0552,** **www.bosphoruscymbal.com.**

9 The **Buckaroo** Bike Seat is a low-cost throne from the distributors of Buckaroo Cymbal Polish, Harris Musical Products.
Y **(781) 894-0776,** **www.picksbythepound.com.**

10 The **ddrum4 se** electronic drum system includes signature sounds from top artists. It also features mesh trigger pads (like the snare pad shown here) and a hi-hat unit that works on a regular hi-hat stand for a more natural action.
Y **(727) 519-9669,** **www.armadilloent.com, www.clavia.se.**

11 **Drumdry** is a cover or bag that helps protect, tune, and condition natural animal-skin drumheads for djembes and other hand drums. The water-resistant bags are packed with moisture-absorbing beads to ensure that the heads stay dry and in tune, as well as cushioning them from damage. **Drum@drumdry.com, www.drumdry.com.**

12 A new entry in **Drum Workshop**'s Exotic Wood series is this striking knotty pine veneer. DW is currently working with the American Forests Foundation, donating funds to plant a new maple or birch tree for every drumkit purchased. The company has also launched an interactive kit-building site at www.dwdrums.com/kitbuilder. **(805) 485-6999, www.dwdrums.com.**

13 **Evans**' MX Gold Standard marching snare batter is currently in use by several top DCI drum corps. The uniquely laminated fiber/polyester head is available for 13" and 14" drums.

In the area of nifty accessories, Evans' Flip Key (shown here) is a small metal cylinder that flips open into a handy drum key. Also new is the Key Chain Adapter, which has a sturdy rubber boot that fits snugly around most standard drumkeys to attach them to a key chain.

(631) 439-3300, www.evansdrumheadds.com.

14 An innovative component of **Gibraltar's** Rack Factory drum-rack system is this legless snare drum stand. A heavy-duty Road Series rack clamp and a memory lock prevent the stand from tipping. **(860) 509-8891, www.kamanmusic.com.**

15 **Gretsch** has upgraded its entry-level Blackhawk series with improved hardware and a more authentic "Gretsch" appearance. **(860) 509-8891, www.kamanmusic.com.**

16 *Instant Guide To Drum Grooves* (by Maria Martinez) and *The Techno Primer* (by Tony Verderosa) are brand-new instructional books that join Norm Weinberg's *Guide To Standardized Drumset Notation* in the **Hal Leonard** catalog. **(414) 774-3630, www.halleonard.com.**

17 The **Hart Dynamics** Pro 6.4 pad kit features hammered metal shells, a stronger and more realistic-feeling Ecymbal hi-hat, and three different types of mesh heads. The system features TE3 (Transparent Energy) triggering technology and is compatible with all sound modules. **(850) 654-1455, www.hartdynamics.com.**

18 The American flag design in **Hot Sticks**' Macrolus series predates 9/11, but has proven extra popular since. The foil-wrapped model is available in most standard stick sizes. **(228) 467-0762.**

19 You won't misplace *this* case in a dark club. Hot green is just one of the bright new colors in **Humes & Berg**'s Enduro case line. This wheeled model features a pull-out handle for easy control while rolling. Y (219) 397-1980, www.humes-berg.com.

20 Oversized wheels and a sturdy steel frame make this rolling hardware bag from **Impact Industries** a lightweight, go-anywhere unit. Y (715) 842-1651, www.impactind.com.

21 Vintage green logos (circa 1983) mark these Agop Signature rides and hi-hats from **Istanbul Agop**. They're handmade in Turkey with old tools and techniques, according to processes described in Agop Tomurcurk's personal notebook. The company also manufactures **Alchemy** cymbals in Professional (hand-made) and Pro ART (hand/machine made) lines.
Y (201) 599-0100, www.istanbulcymbals.com.

22 **JohnnyraBB**'s True Grip models are unlacquered on the grip area for a more natural feel. They're available in 7A, 5A, 5B, and 2B models. Also new are nylon-tipped Traditional Series sticks in the same sizes. Y (731) 658-2160, www.johnnyrabb.com.

23 From **Latin Percussion Inc.** comes this CP Combo Conga Set. It includes 9" and 10" drums and an adjustable stand at an affordable price, and is targeted at young musicians in elementary and middle school. LP was also showing Spirit Of America Accents congas and bongos. A portion of the proceeds from each drum sold goes to 9/11 victim relief. Finally, LP is now distributing the RMV brand of authentic Brazilian percussion instruments. Y (973) 478-6903, www.lpmusic.com.

24 **Ludwig** has added an all-birch kit to its professional Classic series. New Pro and Accent bass drum pedals featuring reinforcing Rock Plates were also debuted at the show. Y (574) 522-1675, www.ludwig-drums.com.

25 **Mapex** took advantage of the show to focus on their wide range of snare drums, including the Deep Forest, Black Panther, Precious Metal, and Pro series. Y (615) 793-2050, www.mapexdrums.com.

26 Holy cymbals, Batman! **Meinl**'s Thomas Lang signature line, modestly titled "Tom's Beckens (Cymbals)" includes a very shimmery, un-China-like 14" China crash that's riddled with holes.
Y (615) 227-5090, www.meinl.de.

27 Metrophones and Studio Kans from **Big Bang Distribution** now feature smaller and lighter headbands for more comfortable prolonged wear. Y (818) 727-1127, www.bigbangdist.com.

28 **Pacific Drums And Percussion** now offers the FS kit, made in mainland China. The all-birch kit is intended to offer exceptional features and value for its budget price. Also available from Pacific are disappearing-boom snare drum stands, perfect for stand-up playing of concert snares or placement of auxiliary snares on a drumkit. Y **(805) 485-6999,** **www.pacificdrums.com.**

29 **Peace** drums introduced their new Onyx series maple/mahogany lacquered kits. The series features a choice of four hand-lacquered finishes with RavenPlate treated black mini-lugs and hardware, a matching wood snare drum, and Power Fusion sizes, all at an entry-level price.
Y **(626) 581-4510,** **www.peacemusic.com.tw.**

30 This 3x13 mahogany piccolo is new to **Pearl**'s extensive snare drum line. The company also now has an interactive Web site on which drummers can select and hear various combinations of Pearl drums.
Y **(615) 833-4477,** **www.pearldrum.com.**

31 This golden amber drumkit was literally the pinnacle of **Peavey**'s display. It highlights the company's unique Radial Bridge drum design and attractive natural wood finishes. Y **(601) 483-5365,** **www.peavey.com.**

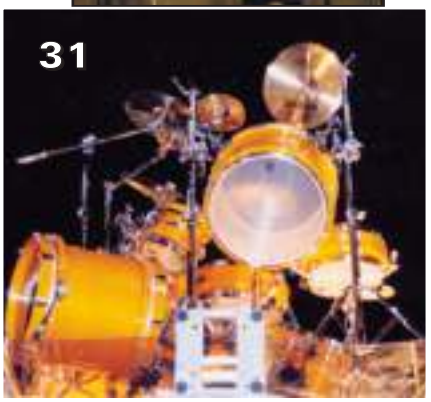
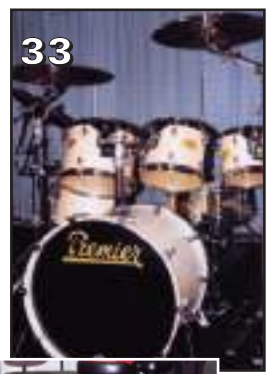
32 Billy Mason (Tim McGraw) demoed **Pintech**'s Vision electronic pad kit, which now features more realistic cymbal triggers. Y **(864) 288-1500,** **www.edrums.com.**

33 **Premier**'s Artist Series is available with maple (shown here) or birch shells. Also highlighted were Modern Classic snare drums (reviewed in the October *MD*). Y **(856) 231-8825,** **www.premier-percussion.com.**

34 **Remo** is focusing on bringing percussion to extremely young players with their Kid's Percussion instruments.
Y **(661) 294-5600,** **www.remo.com.**

35 New models in **Roc-N-Soc**'s throne line include (from left) a chrome-based Lunar (five-point base), a standard tripod with a new molded urethane seat, and a gas-lift Motion Throne.
Y **(828) 452-1736,** **www.rocnsoc.com.**

36 **Roland**'s new mid-priced V-Stage kit features a redesigned rack, along with CY12 Ride/Crash cymbal pads with selectable dual outputs (bow/bell or bow/crash). Also new are the PM-1 Personal Monitor and TDA-700 stage amplifier systems for electronic percussionists.
Y **(323) 890-3700,** **www.rolandus.com.**

37 Introductions from **Sabian** include 16" and 18" HHXplosion crashes (with natural finishes and large, raw bells) and a 14" HHX Evolution Mini-Chinese (that's extra-thin and features a high profile and brilliant finish).
Y **(506) 272-2019,** **www.sabian.com.**



38 In-ear personal monitoring is becoming more prevalent at all levels of performance. The PSM 200 is **Shure**'s newest and most affordable system. Also new is the Auxpander, which can be used to expand a mixing board's aux-send capabilities for extra monitor-mix options. Y (847) 866-2200, www.shure.com.

39 **Sonor**'s new Artist snare drum series includes this 5x13 beech-shell model. It features a 27 mm–thick shell, Power Hoops, Tune Safe lugs, and a distinctive "Earth" finish. Y (804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com, www.sonor.de.

40 **Tama**'s affordable Swingstar kit has been upgraded with double-braced hardware and other improvements—with no increase in price. Also new are a Black Magic covered finish for Starclassic Performer EFX kits, an Aztec Red Fade painted finish on Starclassic Performer models, and wood hoops on Rockstar Custom kits. Y (215) 638-8670, www.tama.com.

41 This colorful djembe bag from **TKL** features lots of pockets, convertible single/dual carrying straps, and a fold-out "foot tred" that you can stand on to hold the bag while you pull out the drum. TKL also offers the Guardrail series of drum bags, which are reinforced with steel bracing systems. Y (804) 749-8300, www.tkl.com.

42 **Toca**'s new Unplugged series features a wide variety of percussion instruments targeted at drumset players, other instrumentalists, and folks who'd just like to get involved with hand percussion in an easy and accessible manner. Y (860) 509-8891, www.kamanmusic.com.

43 **Treeworks** chimes are now available with an adjustable damper bar. (Several chime bars are shown here behind the bar in order to make it more visible.) Y (877) 372-1601, www.treeworkschimes.com.

44 **Vater** has created new, ultra-secure clamp-on drumstick holders, and a marching stick quiver. New to their stick line are Phat Ride and Lil' John Roberts Philly Sound models. Y (781) 767-1877, www.vater.com.

45 **XL Specialty Percussion**'s Elite Air Protechtor Cases are oversized roto-molded drum cases with contours that keep drums away from the sidewalls. They're stackable, and they come in the red, purple, and gray granite finishes shown here (along with ebony). Y (260) 637-5684, www.xlspec.com.

46 **Yamaha** has redesigned its entire line of bass drum pedals, with five single- and four double-pedal models. The new pedals—called the Dragon series—are made in the company's Indonesian motorcycle factory. Also new is a pair of affordable yet distinctive snare drums called Musashi (named for a famous Samurai warrior). The drums are made in the company's Japanese high-end drum factory, and feature oak shells, 45° bearing edges, and high-gloss black finishes with a special dual-sword logo. The 12" model comes fitted with a matching Groove Wedge for cross-stick playing. In the area of electronics, Yamaha's DTXPRESS II offers improved features with no increase in price. Y (714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrums.com.

47 This lacquer-finished LX kit is from **Zenith**'s mid-level line, but is priced lower than many entry-level kits. It features a 50% maple shell and double-braced hardware. Y (909) 579-0569.

48 **Zildjian** has replaced their ZBT sheet-bronze series with new ZXT models. The line features thin, medium-thin, and Rock weights, each featuring different hammering. A full range of models is offered, including the unique Trashformer shown here. This "warped" 14" cymbal is intended to be played alone or piggybacked onto another cymbal for unusual effects. Y (781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com.

Also Shown

Cadeson was showing their full line of entry-level to professional drums, including the high-end Impact series. Y (626) 286-6866, www.cadesonmusic.com.

Coda Drums introduced a Generation Beta budget kit that comes with improved hardware, starter cymbals, and a throne. Y (650) 615-8991, www.themusiclink.net.

Fibes continued its special offering of authentic 1950s-era pastel automobile colors, which they debuted earlier this year. Y (512) 416-9955, www.fibes.com.

Paiste's display highlighted their Noise Works series (reviewed in this issue). The company has also reworked and upgraded its 302, 402, 502, and 802 entry-level lines. Y (800) 472-4783, www.paiste.com.

Pork Pie was on hand with a selection of custom snare drums. Y (818) 992-0783, www.porkpiedrums.com.

Pro-Mark introduced new Mambo model timbale sticks. The company has also incorporated Diggit Stickweights into its accessory line. Y (713) 666-2525, www.promark-stix.com.

Diverse percussion instruments and innovative ways to mount them are the specialty of **Rhythm Tech**. Y (914) 636-6900, www.rhythmtech.com.

Besides their custom paint finishes, **Spaun** offers a variety of colorful and unusual wraps. Y (909) 971-7761, www.spaundrums.com.

Sunlite's Studio kit features 9-ply maple-basswood shells for a professional sound at an affordable price. Y (626) 448-8018, www.sunlitedrum.com.

Taye's full range of kits includes this Tour Pro model, in an attractive honey amber stained finish. Y (909) 628-9589, www.taye.com.

Bamboo Brushes are the newest addition to **Unigrip**'s stick and accessory line. Y (818) 840-0280, www.unigrip2000.com.

Vic Firth was showing a new Tony Royster Jr. Signature stick, along with recently introduced American Heritage (maple) and American Sound (ball-tipped hickory) lines. Y (781) 326-3455, www.vicfirth.com.

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"The pedal is **beautiful;** the response, **effortless."**
Abe Laboriel, Jr.
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Steve Smith
(Vital Information)

"The Titanium **blazes** every other pedal."

Gerald Heyward
(Mary J. Blige)

"The most **unbelievably fast** pedal I've ever played."

Deen Castronovo
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"The **radest** pedal I've ever played."

Brain
(Guns 'N' Roses)

DW 9000 TITANIUM

LIMITED EDITION BASS DRUM PEDALS

Because they combine over 25 years of experience as pedal specialists with today's most advanced materials and technologies, we think our new 9000 Titanium bass drum pedals represent a major step forward in high-tech, high-performance pedal design. But, don't just take our word for it; listen to the world's most progressive players.

Of course, besides listening to what they're saying about the 9000 Titanium, listen what these leading-edge artists are playing with it, too. Then try a Titanium for yourself at your local drum dealer and remember— whether it's evolutionary drumming or revolutionary pedals— actions speak louder than words.

Floating Rotor and Drive Shaft

To achieve the 9000's incredibly smooth action, the eccentric rotor (patent pending) is independently mounted on the horizontal drive shaft through the use of friction-reducing ball bearings.

Floating Spring Assembly

By moving the spring to the center of the pedal and maintaining the vertical alignment of the moving parts, the indirect transfer and loss of energy is virtually eliminated— further optimizing the pedal's speed and smoothness.

Titanium Footboard

Space-age Titanium is used to maintain the weight and balance of the footboard while vastly improving its strength.

Delta-Plus Multi-Bearing System

In addition to the patented DW Delta II Ball-Bearing Hinge, the 9000 utilizes super-smooth ball-bearings at the rotor, drive shaft, rocker and spring connector.

Handcrafted Aluminum Components

In order to facilitate the precision, tight tolerances and reduced mass the new 9000 technologies require, the pedal is constructed from high-grade aluminum parts that are machined, not cast.

Performance-Proven DW Technology

An abundance of DW's exclusive pedal advances have been integrated into the 9000 Series, including lightweight aluminum pedal plates and optional "Elevator" stacking heel plates.

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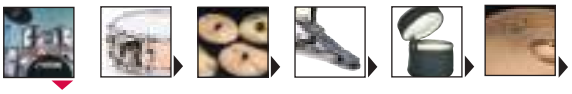


Sonor Force 1001 Studio Drumkit

Simple, Solid, And Sonically Sweet

HITS

excellent resonance and well-balanced tone

professional sound and construction at an entry-level price

by Mike Haid

Oh, to be a beginning drummer shopping in today's gear market. If you know what to look for, you can find a very professional-sounding kit for an entry-level price. Such is the case with Sonor's Force 1001 Studio kit.

Since this five-piece kit is Sonor's latest offering for the beginning drummer, I was prepared for all sorts of unpleasant weaknesses and lack of quality in certain areas as I began to assemble the kit. What I discovered was pleasantly surprising, if not downright confusing.

The Drums

Sonor has been in the drum business for over a hundred twenty-five years, and their craftsmanship is evident on the Force 1001. The snare drum is a metal $5\frac{1}{2}$x14 model. The rest of the drums feature 9-ply basswood shells using Sonor's Cross Laminated Tension Free (CLTF) construction. The series comes in three covered finishes: Emerald Green, Reflex Silver, and Black. Our review kit was the Reflex Silver covered finish, which is a low-gloss metal-flake wrap—simple and well matched with the chromed metal hardware.

Snare

The snare drum sounded great out of the box. The heads were not labeled, but they appeared to be a coated single-ply batter and a clear, thin single-ply snare-side. The throw-off was of a simple, standard design.

The drum needed only minimal tuning to make it sound crisp and responsive. Articulation throughout its tuning range was excellent. Again, I kept thinking, "This is not a beginner's drum."

Bass Drum

The bass drum comes fitted with a clear single-ply batter and a black front head with a hole. Our review drum had smooth, consistent bearing edges, solid wood hoops, and sturdy, easy-to-adjust legs.

The drum sounded good with no muffling—big and resonant. It might work well that way for jazz applications, but it would probably need some muffling for most other styles of music. I found that an Evans EQ pad gave the drum just enough ringing tone with a bit of punch.

Toms

This is the area that usually separates the men from the boys (or the entry-level from the pro) in terms of quality. Poor construction, faulty bearing edges, or out-of-round shells—which are all too common on some less-expensive kits—make a drum hard to tune to a true pitch. No such problem with the Force 1001 toms. They had smooth, solid bearing edges all the way 'round. As a result, they were quick and easy to tune. With clear single-ply heads top and bottom, the toms produced excellent tone and resonance. Their mounting hardware was simple to assemble and adjust, and appeared to be very durable.

Hardware

The Force 1001 kit comes with Sonor 200 Series hardware. Included are a hi-hat stand, a snare stand, a mini boom stand, a double tom holder, and a bass drum pedal.

The hi-hat stand and bass drum pedal were sturdy and smooth to operate. They compared favorably to basic, no-frills pedals from any other name drum company. The double tom holder was versatile and locked solidly into place from several angles. The tom holder and hi-hat stand also include memory locks. The double-braced legs of the mini boom stand held a ride cymbal with ease.

Hmm...smooth pedals, strong and versatile tom holders, memory locks, no rattles, no weak joints.... Can someone please tell me where the "beginner" part of this kit comes in?

Conclusion

In twenty years as a professional drummer, I've played a lot of kits. When I played the Force 1001, right out of the boxes, my first thought was that it couldn't really be an entry-level kit. It's actually one of the best-sounding, most comfortable kits I've ever played. It had beautiful tone and an exceptionally balanced feel.

The quick response of the single-ply drumheads made performing intricate technical patterns easy. The outstanding resonance of the toms and the bass drum made the kit a pleasure to play at low volumes. On the other hand, the open tonality of the drums cut through nicely at higher volumes. And the bass drum pedal was smooth and responsive, requiring no adjustments from the factory settings.

I really had a hard time pulling myself away from this kit—especially after I discovered the surprising price for all its appealing features and performance. If this is a beginner kit, then after twenty years of playing, call me a beginner!

THE NUMBERS

Configuration: 16x20 bass drum, 5½x14 snare drum, 9x10 and 10x12 rack toms, 16x14 floor tom. A five-piece Stage series kit is available with larger toms and bass drum. Drums feature 9-ply basswood shells. Standard hardware package includes a Sonor 200 Series double tom holder, a snare stand, a hi-hat stand, a mini boom stand, and a bass drum pedal. All drumheads are single-ply. Toms have clear heads top and bottom, the bass drum has a clear batter and a black front head, the snare drum has a coated batter and a clear snare-side head. The review kit is finished in Reflex Silver covering; Emerald Green and Black are also available.

List price: **$749.95**

(804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com.

Pacific Snare Drums

Affordable New Voices In The Choir

HITS

hand-hammered brass model is a good all-around metal snare

wood hoops on the maple snare create a nice variation in timbre, with incredible rimshots

10" and 12" drums make good secondary snare options, but can also stand alone

drums have a simple visual appeal that would fit into almost any setup

MISSES

thickness of wood hoops may prevent the maple snare from fitting into some snare stands

tuning the 10" and 12" snares was tricky

Pacific Drums is Drum Workshop's entry-level to mid-priced brand. They've recently introduced a new series of specialized snare drums, including 6x10 and 6x12 auxiliary snares, a 5½x14 maple snare with wood hoops, and a 5x14 hand-hammered brass model. Drum options like these are often seen within higher-priced lines. But manufacturing overseas helps Pacific make them available to the drummer on a budget—which is a welcome idea. Let's take a look.

5x14 Hand-Hammered Brass

The hand-hammered shell of this drum created instant visual appeal; it's inviting from across the room. Pacific's oval turret lugs and a smooth-operating snare throw-off complete the assembly.

The drum possessed a fantastic dynamic range—from a whisper to a roar. Its crisp sound was equally great for playing ghost notes or a solid backbeat. The drum tuned up nicely, and it sounded good at both tight and loose tensionings. The brass shell provided a pleasant ring with nice overtones.

Overall this was a very nice drum. It sounded and looked good, and it would fit neatly into just about any setup. And its mid-level price makes it a real bargain. It's a fine addition to the Pacific line.

5½x14 Maple (With Wood Hoops And Tube Lugs)

If you've never played a wood-hoop snare drum, this is a good model to check out. Effects like rimshots, cross-sticks, and playing on the hoop all come across with a timbre that's just a bit different from that created by metal hoops. In particular, the rimshot on this snare really stood out, with a dry, woody crack. The cross-stick was pointed and warm, and created a nice clave sound. And at ¾" wide and 14 plies thick, the wood hoop itself makes a great playing surface. (Pacific's wood hoops are available separately so that an existing snare drum can be outfitted with them.)

Besides its notable sounds, the wood hoop drum has an attractive aesthetic design. The hoops are drilled so that the tension rods are countersunk, maintaining a clean surface area. The snare-side hoop has unobtrusive cutouts to accommodate the strainer, which has a throw-off that moves away from the drum. The 8-ply, natural-finish maple and simple tube lugs combine to create an attractive drum.

6x10 Auxiliary Snare

Wood Hoop Snare

6x12 Auxiliary Snare

One thing to be aware of is that the extra thickness of the hoops may prevent the drum from fitting in the baskets of all snare stands. The bottom hoop could be replaced with a standard metal one to get around this, but that would ruin the overall point of the drum. DW's 9000 ($172) or 8000 ($148) stands will accommodate the drum, as will those of several other brands. Just be sure that you have (or can obtain) an appropriate stand before you invest in this drum.

6x10 and 6x12 Auxiliary Snares

These drums were a lot of fun to play. When the 10" was tuned where I wanted it, it really cooked. It was sharp, bright, and high, but with some space and body in the sound provided by the 6" depth. The 12" had similar characteristics, though it was a little deeper in pitch. While perhaps not as sensitive as I would like when played quietly, these drums performed nicely at medium to loud volumes.

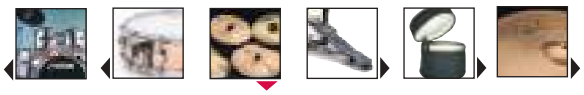
The one problem I encountered with these drums was in tuning them. They had a tendency to sound boxy, rather than crisp—particularly at quieter dynamic levels. On the other end of the spectrum, rimshots seemed to produce some wild harmonics, making me stop to see if the drum had been knocked out of tune. The good news is that I *was* able to get the drums to sound good. But it did take a little extra effort. Be prepared to spend a little time with these drums.

Of the two, the 10" drum was a particular blast. The 12" was nice, but for my tastes it didn't offer quite enough contrast to a larger snare. With a natural-finish maple veneer and a mount that would fit virtually any tom arm, either drum would make a nice addition to a full-size setup, or a stand-alone snare in a mini kit.

THE NUMBERS

5x14 Hand-Hammered Brass	$419
5½x14 Maple With Wood Hoops	$454
6x10	$238
6x12	$274
14" Wood Hoops (pair)	$138

(805) 485-6999, www.PacificDrums.com.



Paiste Noise Works Cymbals

From Trashy To Classy

HITS

well-designed combinations

contemporary electronic gated sounds

useful in a variety of musical circumstances

several of the cymbals are exceptional when used as stand-alones

MISSES

Fizzle Hats too quiet for most applications

by T. Bruce Wittet

The very name of Paiste's new Noise Works line smacks of confidence. After all, how many companies would dare equate their cymbals with noise? It makes sense, though, when you consider that the current cymbals are part of Paiste's growing Exotic/Percussion series. In particular, they're intended to emulate samples in an electronica/drum 'n' bass context.

The Noise Works series consists of some specialized hi-hats, along with several stacked-cymbal combinations that can be loosened or tightened on the cymbal tilter to alter their decay and tone. Many of the cymbals also sound spectacular on their own, unstacked, and thus could find a place in a variety of musical styles. But let's begin with the combinations.

11"/18" Dark Buzz China

Paiste's literature describes this as the "classic splash/China stack combination." You mount the 11" inside the inverted 18", atop any cymbal stand. (Note: You may need to adjust the size of felt you use in order to accommodate two cymbals in a space designed for one.)

The Dark Buzz China was, in a word, fun. I left the wing nut loose and struck the outer lip of the China cymbal, allowing the smaller, "nesting" cymbal to rattle away—which it did for a good *four seconds*. Hitting the smaller cymbal gives an aggressive staccato attack with some serious body to back it up. Tightening the wing nut brings the metallic component in the mix to the fore. Mounting the stack "right side up" (that is, with the China cymbal hiding the smaller cymbal) provides a similar if somewhat more metallic sound.

The 11" cymbal and its mate each sound good in solo use. One is a fine dark splash; the other is a buttery China. I wouldn't hesitate to use either in several musical styles other than electronic.

Clockwise from far left: 14"/18" Trash Set, Double Clang Crash, 12" Fast X-Hat, Dark Buzz China, 12" Paper Splash Hats, 12" Fizzle Hats; center: Triple Raw Smash

12"/14"/14" Triple Raw Smash

I was so knocked out with the Triple Raw Smash in the testing room that I brought the set to a gig. The 14" bottom is an exotic, deeply hammered crash. The middle cymbal is darn near flat as a pancake and is pitted with deep, "industrial-looking" hammer marks. The bell is tiny. The metal may be brass or a B8 alloy; it's hard to tell. The top cymbal is another killer splash, responsive to a flick of the stick. As a unit, they are *very* cool.

With the wing nut loose, I enjoyed an amazing combination of metallic attack and swell. When I applied some tension to the plates with the wing nut, the metallic component increased in direct proportion to the decrease of sustain and harmonics. I'd recommend the Triple Raw Smash as a way to get a *lot* of cymbal sounds for your money.

12"/12" Double Clang Crash

The Double Clang Crash exhibits a pleasing and sustaining "wobble" that suggests, if you will, wings flapping on an electronic bird. By varying stick placement I obtained a variety of effects, from glassy shattering sounds to Bill Stewart–like crotale/splash timbres. I found myself using these in lieu of my usual right-hand crash. They offered greater complexity, sufficient sustain, and full body. With a bass drum hit underneath, the effect was full and defiant. The bottom cymbal is not much as a stand-alone, but the top is a lovely splash.

12" Fizzle Hats

The "Fizzle" in the name here denotes a fuzzy chick sound, claimed by Paiste to emulate heavily gated, sampled hi-hat sounds. I thought that the cymbals were a little *too* soft in a live situation. But when I listened back to a mini-disc recording I made of all the test cymbals, the Fizzle hats did, indeed, deliver the mandated "clipped" sounds, with enough body to pass for old Turkish cymbals. The chick was minimal but audible. These hats were at their best when played semi-open (just "kissing"). In that configuration they delivered loads of sustain without overshadowing any electronic accompaniment.

12" Fast X-Hats

The top cymbal is thicker than the bottom one in this extremely well-matched pair. I preferred them to the Fizzle Hats and felt that they would project in more situations. They responded well to double-strokes and had a good open/closed chick.

12" Paper Splash Hats

These were my favorite among the hi-hats for their blend of metallic sharpness and warmth—with neither predominating. Among the fastest hi-hats I've *ever* played, they took everything I threw at them, including house beats, Tower Of Power splashes—the works. The top cymbal is so thin you could bend it almost in half. And because it's hammered with wide peen hammers, it possesses exotic crash capabilities.

Trash Sets

Trash Sets combine medium-sized (and fairly inexpensive) nickel-silver bottom cymbals with smaller (and *really* inexpensive) brass cymbals for a trashy, white-noise sort of effect (and an appealing low price). The top cymbals are heavily hammered, with edges somewhat resembling Paiste's Sound Edge rippled hi-hat bottoms. This "wave" prevents the top cymbal from marrying fully with the bottom one. The bottom cymbals have an inverted outer lip. (That is, the flange points down.) Three versions are available: 12" (top) / 16" (bottom), 14"/18", and 16"/20".

The 12"/16" combination offered pleasing sustain that barked in the industrial sense, but curiously reminded me of tambourines in church. When tightened down, the metal sound stood out and the sustain shortened. A wondrous drum 'n' bass combination, I could see these sneaking into a singer-songwriter milieu.

I took the 14"/18" set to a Miles Davis *Bitches Brew* tribute gig. Why not? That music was arguably the forerunner of contemporary funky styles. Smiles from the band indicated I had made the right choice. When played alone, the 18" cymbal was large enough to yield a funky (and, of course, trashy) China sound. Even with both cymbals tensioned loose and flapping, double-strokes came out distinctly, while strokes on the bottom cymbal lip were broad and effective. Ideas were flying at me with such rapidity that I found it necessary to force myself to use this Trash Set more sparingly!

The 16"/20" combination offers many sweet spots. Each cymbal works well on its own, especially the bottom, which offers a spooky China sound. The top is a great crash.

Conclusion

Just by looking at them, you can tell that a good deal of thought has gone into these cymbals. They're specially designed to complement each other and, in many instances, to act as valid stand-alones. Beyond their ability to deliver the gated, white noise sounds common in electronica, I would recommend the Paiste Noise Works to those who seek a way to kick-start their creativity.

The cymbal sets (and singles) are reasonably priced, and, again, you're getting a whole lot of cymbal sounds from each combo. Six months ago, I couldn't have imagined myself finding a use for stacked cymbals. Now I'm full of ideas of how to employ them in place of my usual choices.

THE NUMBERS

Dark Buzz China	
11"/18" set	$528
11" top	$186
18" bottom	$342
Triple Raw Smash	
12"/14"/14" set	$554
12" top	$168
14" middle	$188
14" bottom	$198
Double Clang Crash	
12"/12" set	$414
12" top	$168
12" bottom	$246
Fizzle Hat, Fast X-Hat	
12" pair	$216
12" top	$ 48
12" bottom	$168
Paper Splash Hat	
12" pair	$414
12" top	$168
12" bottom	$246
Trash Sets	
12"/16" set	$140
14"/18" set	$190
16"/20" set	$240
12" top	$ 40
14" top	$ 60
16" top	$ 80
16" bottom	$100
18" bottom	$130
20" bottom	$160

(800) 472-4783, www.paiste.com.

Sonor Giant Step Bass Drum Pedals

One Step Beyond

HITS

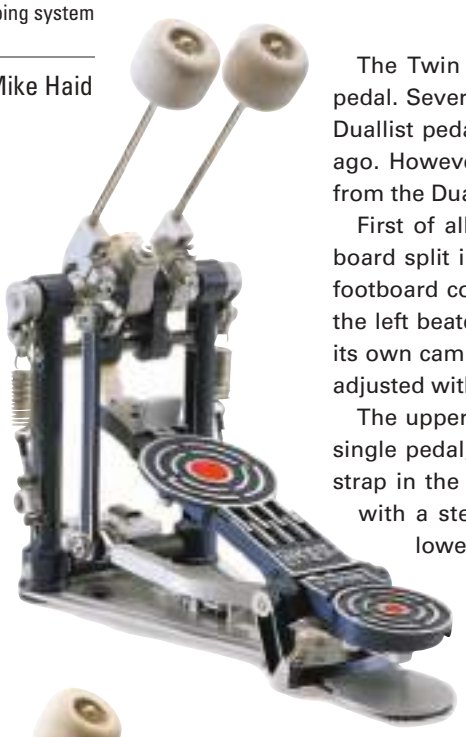
Twin Effect provides double pedal effect from a single pedal

pedals are smooth and durable

creative new clamping system

by Mike Haid

Sonor's superb new Giant Step series of hi-tech bass drum pedals includes single- and double-pedal models. But the big buzz is about a third design that Sonor calls the Twin Effect. It's a technological breakthrough that allows double bass drum technique to be generated from a single pedal.



Variation On A Theme

The Twin Effect is not the first attempt to create a double-action single pedal. Several designs have come and gone over the years. And Scotland's Duallist pedal has enjoyed some success since its introduction a few years ago. However, the Twin Effect utilizes a design that's completely different from the Dualist's.

First of all, the Twin Effect pedal features a Splitboard, which is a footboard split into two independent sections. The larger, upper portion of the footboard controls the right beater, while the smaller, heel portion controls the left beater. Each footboard operates independently from the other, with its own cam and springs. The angles of the beater cams can be individually adjusted without changing the board positions.

The upper (main) footboard is designed in the same fashion as a regular single pedal, with the beater cam offset to the right and the main cam and strap in the center. The "Silent Strap Drive" is made of heavy-duty plastic with a steel insert. (Optional "Silent Chain Drives" are available.) The lower footboard is controlled by a Power Rod that connects to the left beater's cam and springs. This small, circular footboard is amazingly smooth and accurate. Rubberized "targets" indicate the center of each footboard. However, I found that using the "target" to center my approach did not always achieve the most balanced position for using both footboards.

So How Does It Feel?

I first tried the Splitboard approach to creating steady alternating heel/toe 16th notes. I could immediately feel certain muscles beginning to work that aren't usually called upon in a single-pedal approach. I found it awkward to create smooth heel/toe patterns, due to the fact that you've got to be able to generate the same force striking the heel plate as you do striking the toe plate. This is a real technical and physical challenge.

I found more success by rocking my foot back and forth without leaving the footboards than I did by dancing on the pedal and bouncing my foot back and forth. It was easier to create a triplet feel by sliding my foot back a little on the Splitboard and bouncing my foot back and forth. This produced a much more powerful stroke than trying to create a solid 16th-note pattern. It worked especially well when I used the floor tom and bass drum together to create triplet patterns: first stroke on the floor tom and second and third strokes alternating on the Splitboard.

There's no denying that a certain amount of technique adaptation will be required in order to really become accomplished on the Twin Effect pedal—especially if you're a heel-up player. But I was able to at least "get the hang of it" fairly quickly, and I'm confident that a little more practice would have

led to greater facility. In other words, it *can* be done. (I heard that Thomas Lang used a Twin Effect on a Jam Block at the *MD* Festival Weekend, and was just *scary*.) Once the necessary technique has been mastered, a lot of interesting musical ideas can be created with the Twin Effect. Imagine what could be done using one on each of two bass drums!

If You Prefer One At A Time

I also tried a Giant Step single pedal. It's designed with essentially all of the same cool features as the Twin Effect pedal, except for the Splitboard components. It has tons of adjustment potential, and displays Sonor's famous German engineering. As a result, it performed smoothly, quickly, and quietly.

Like *all* Giant Step pedals, the single pedal features a unique clamping system called the Smart Connect System. This includes a Docking Station, which is a separate unit from the pedal that clamps to the bass drum and remains on the drum. An adjustable ball clamp on the pedal slips into the Docking Station and is locked in place by a sliding lever. It sounds more complicated than it is, and it works well. It really makes the pedal quick and easy to pop on and off the drum.

THE NUMBERS

Giant Step Twin Effect Pedal **$625**
Giant Step Single Pedal **$345**
Both pedals come with an embroidered vinyl carrying case. A Giant Step double pedal and a Middle Pedal (with two slave pedals to the left and right of centered beaters) are also available.

(804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com.

Quick Looks

Protection Racket Drum And Cymbal Bags

Protection Racket M.I. (Musical Instrumen Transportation System), originally launched in the UK in 1994, now comes to the shores of the USA. Based in the surfing Mecca of the UK, Cornwall, the com pany began as a manufa er of surfboard bags. twenty years they expa into musical instrument b bringing fresh materials new design ideas with th

The bags sent for re included the PR6024 stic PR3006 6½x14 snare drum bag, PR6021DXC Deluxe cymbal bag, and the PR5038W hardware bag. The bags are constructed in three layers: a waterproof, abrasion-resistant material on the outside, a light, rigid, compression-resistant foam in the middle, and non-abrasive, synthetic fleece inside. Altogether this creates a sturdy bag that keeps drums and cymbals safe, cozy, and dry. Heavy-duty zipper openings, tough shoulder straps, a are other elements fou you'd want them. The bag held a drum snugl its thick handle provide a lightweight, comfort able way to carry it about.

What really caught ention, though, was the al bag. It featured two compartments: one for er cymbals up to 22", one for hi-hats and er cymbals. Both com ts contain a removable double pouch, formed by synthetic fleece disc separators sewn halfway around their edges. Each hi-hat cymbal easily slips into its own pocket, and all this goes into the bag with room for additional cymbals between the pouch and walls.

This concept repeats with the larger section of the bag, and while a 22" cymbal won't fit in the pouch separator, it will fit between the separator and lined wall of the bag. The end result is that cymbals can't bang around within the bag, yet the bag itself *can* be banged around safely.

The 38x12x12 hardware bag is equally well designed. While not lined with fleece (which would be impractical for hardware), it's a strong, omy, thickly padded at can be handled in ys. There are padded handles that meet in the middle, as well as handles on the ends of the bag. Most ingeniously, there are wheels on one end (such as you'd find on contemporary luggage) so the bag can be rolled around without all that double-braced gear breaking your back.

Even the stick bag has some nifty features, like big clear pouches inside so you can find a drumkey or that stub of a pencil without rooting around all day. The bag has ties to hang from a floor tom, is fitted with both a handle and a shoulder strap, and is big enough to hold a variety of sticks.

Overall, Protection Racket combines smart design i unique materi make a great of drum bags The selection is good and the prices are very reasonable: $29 for the stick bag, $44 for the snare drum ca $119 for the c and hardware bags. And they sport one of the most bad-ass logos on either side of the Atlantic. The line is distributed in the US by Big Bang Distribution, (800) 547-6401, www.bigbangdist.com.

Martin Patmos

JOHNDOLMAYANSYSTEMOFADOWN

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Paiste Innovations Cymbals

19" Heavy Crash And 21" Heavy Ride

In the September 2001 *MD* I reviewed the new line of Paiste Innovations cymbals. I described Paiste's unique design, which utilizes the 2002 bronze alloy and combines hand hammering, hand lathing, and limited mechanical pre-shaping in a process that Paiste calls "The Sonic Texture Formula." My conclusion was that Paiste had created a line of mid-priced cymbals that was sonically balanced and visually stunning.

Paiste has now beefed up the Innovations line with a 21" heavy ride and a 19" heavy crash. Both cymbals have the same triple-layered look that combines the deeply embedded circular design produced by the pneumatic hammer with a hand-hammered look, finished off with a "golden chain"–style lathing process that makes for one of the most visually attractive cymbals on the market.

The 19" Heavy Crash is also a thick cymbal with its main characteristics being bright and cutting tones.

Despite its density, it emits a nice, full-bodied spread of sound when struck softly. The bell is small but produces a strong, clean tone that carries. Ride characteristics are very defined, with a nice amount of wash. This cymbal would work well in a low- to medium-volume situation as a crash/ride.

The 21" heavy ride broadcasts a thick tone with a bright ping attack and very few overtones. There is a deep resonating overtone that can be heard in a low-volume situation. But it wouldn't be noticable in a medium to loud musical environment. I found that the smaller the bead on the drumstick, the brighter and more defined the ping became. Because of the thickness of the alloy, the 21" heavy ride did not make for a good crash/ride. Its main function is to produce a well-defined stick attack that's cutting and precise. The bell of the cymbal is bright and carries well. It features the same "sandblasted" underside as the Innovations 20" heavy ride, which is reminiscent of Paiste's Rude cymbals.

The conclusion here is simple. The 19" heavy crash and 21" heavy ride are excellent additions to an already impressive line of mid-priced cymbals from Paiste. The crash is priced at $316, the ride goes for $366.

Mike Haid

20" Medium China

If you've ever wondered about the effect of various lathing patterns on a cymbal, check out this one. The lathed rings, which remind me of strings of beads or thin gold chains, are the reason this cymbal emits undulating, high-pitched tones. At quiet volumes, this effect is similar to that of a riveted cymbal. But this is a medium-weight cymbal and would work best in a moderately loud band. Here it will throw its tone over a considerable distance without breaking up into distortion (something I proved on a loud gig). A moderate touch on the lip yields a full splashy tone, while a ride on the bow is tastefully replete in harmonics. List price is $334. **(800) 472-4783, www.paiste.com.**

T. Bruce Wittet

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with Sound Focus Rings
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with Sound Focus Rings
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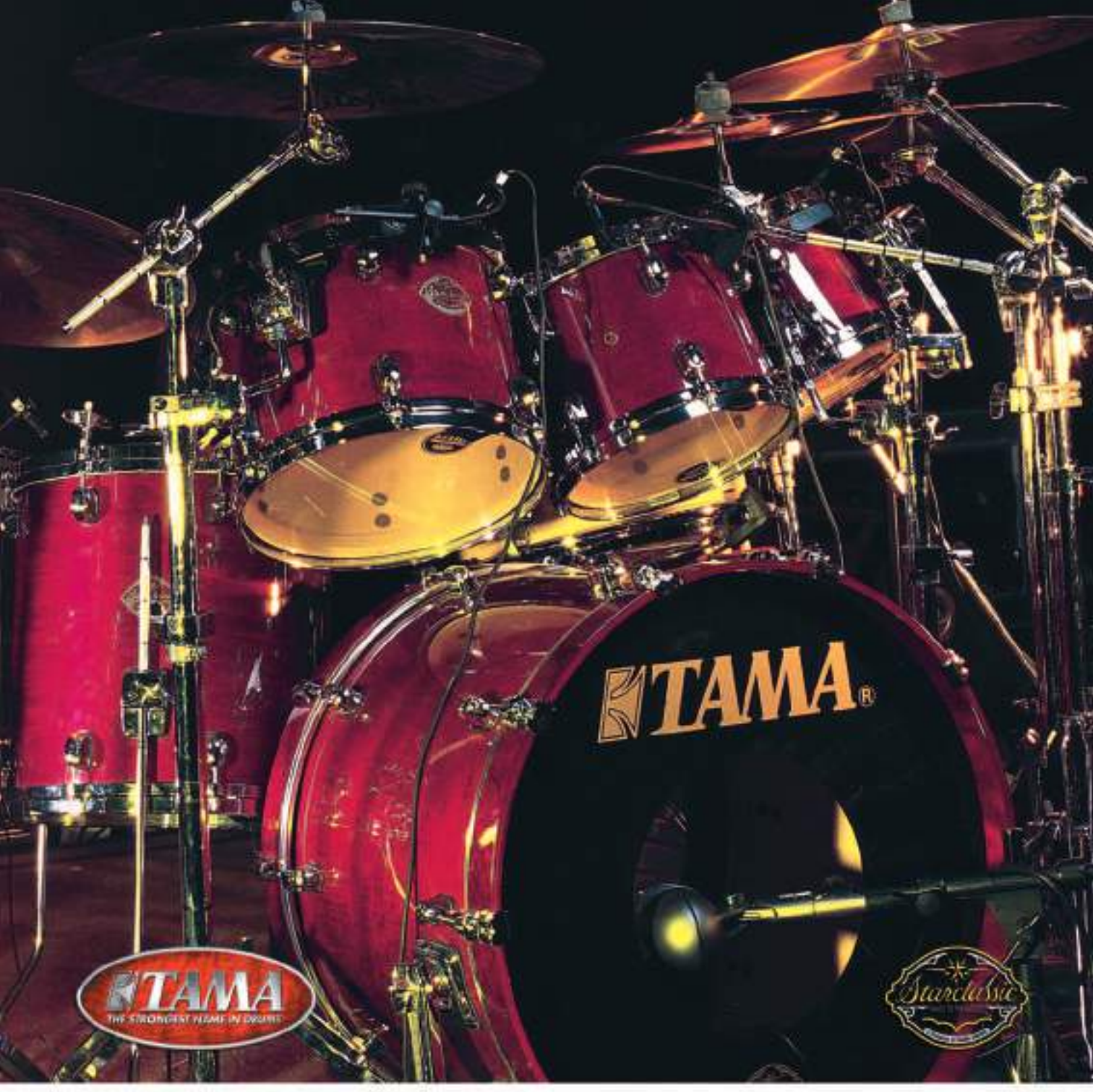


"I vary my set-up depending on whether it's a gig that's more groove oriented, where there's not a whole lot of fills, or something more melodic. On the tracks I just did for Al Jarreau or on my work with George Benson, adding a third tom across the front really helps. I got into placing one floor tom on the left about 15 years ago with the Pointer Sisters. If you play a certain fill with a right hand lead, it's sounds pretty much the same as everyone else. Play the same fill with a left-hand lead and it's almost like the feel is inverted because the phrase and accents are in a different place.

"But what's uniquely mine about my kit isn't so much set-up, it's the sound. My drum sound has evolved in the last four or five years. Before that, people would put on a record and recognize me by the feel. Now they're starting to know my playing just by the sound.

"A big part of my sound is how I tune my drums. Tuning is definitely an art. I don't just tune them one way. In the studio, I actually tune my toms to each track. Sometimes I tune toms melodically, for example so each tom is the note of a major triad. But sometimes I tune them just for tone, for a feel, like today's session with Richard Elliot. The drums sounded so good! The engineers and all the guys were saying, "man, your drums sound incredible." You'd be surprised how many cats ask me to tune their snare drums and drum sets so they can sound like mine.

"But I have to tell them, 'I don't think your drums will sound like mine without the sound rings. Sound Focus Rings are amazing; they're just magical. With the rings I don't have to put tape on them to get that warm sound. My drums are wide open now, which is a totally new adventure for me. Of course, some people may not dig that sound so I understand why Tama offers the option.

"The die-cast hoops give a lot of body and the Iron Cobra pedals, I love 'em. But the two-legged hi-hat is my favorite piece of hardware. I can tilt it up and back so I can play the top side of the hi-hats without leaning over to get a real clear sound when I play doubles or accents. The only thing I don't like about my set is when I don't have it. Fortunately most of the people who hire me out want me to bring my sound so they afford me the luxury of using my own drums. I just really feel comfortable with my drums because I can't compromise my sound for anything."

For the new Tama Drum & Hardware catalog, send $3.00 to: Tama Dept. MD019, PO Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020 or PO Box 2009, Idaho Falls, ID 83403. **www.tama.com**

Jimmy Eat World's

ZACH

LIND

Playin' It Right Down The Middle

Story by Waleed Rashidi • Photos by Jay Blakesberg

It's ironic that Jimmy Eat World, one of indie rock's front-runners (alongside peers like The Promise Ring and The Get Up Kids), a band that's seen their fan base swell in exponential proportions in the past year, have never released a full-length album on an independent label. Unlike their contemporaries who've hashed it out for years on struggling, bedroom-based record companies with minimal tour support and microscopic recording budgets, the Eat Worlds inked their first record contract with Capitol Records fresh out of high school in 1995. And though many would think signing a deal with a major label would equate to instant success, Jimmy Eat World's two-album tenure on Capitol hardly put a blip on the radar of mainstream rock.

"Unfortunately Capitol really didn't believe in us," drummer Zach Lind recalls of his prior label experience. "But in a way, that was sort of a good thing, because it let us take control of what we needed to do. We learned we had to do it ourselves, because no one else would do it for us."

During their self-educating stay at Capitol, Lind and the group created a pair of critically acclaimed albums, *Static Prevails* and *Clarity*, which were produced with Mark Trombino. Though both albums were clearly written from the same creative minds, each had distinct personalities.

Static Prevails was the more aggressive, noisier, and edgier installment, showcasing Lind's substantial rock drive and remnants of his punk-rock upbringing. It was on *Static* where Lind established his trademark sound as a highly dynamic performer, with an ability to explode at the drop of a hat. Complementing vocalist/guitarists Jim Adkins and Tom Linton's breathy to full-bore vocal trade-offs, Lind was right on cue during each transition, keeping it simple yet bursting into full quarter-note crashes when called for.

Clarity took an entirely different route, opting for an airy, predominantly experimental approach to their material. With Lind occasionally exchanging his sticks for timpani mallets or incorporating drum loops, the album had a fresh sonic edge. Unfortunately, rousing critical acclaim didn't necessarily translate into rocketing sales figures, and the band left Capitol after *Clarity*'s release in 1999.

Lind and company headed back into the studio with Trombino and tracked a new batch of material on their own, eventually signing up with DreamWorks shortly thereafter. With the completed album in the hands of their new home, the band began touring again. In August 2001, Jimmy Eat World's third album, an eponymous effort (originally dubbed *Bleed American*) was released.

The end result of *Jimmy Eat World* was twelve tracks of pure power-pop bliss. Although the material was decidedly poppier and more straightforward than their previous efforts, Lind's performance was just as creative as ever, from the missing beats of "Get It Faster" to the innovative tom work on "Your House." And with three successful radio singles, "Bleed American," "Sweetness," and "The Middle" in tow, Lind and company were able to latch onto major tours with Weezer, Green Day, and Blink-182, where audiences got to witness the drummer's relaxed yet disciplined physical demeanor first-hand.

All of a sudden the anonymous group of nine years wasn't so faceless anymore. And though Lind says it's been the ride he's always wished for, he insists his dreams are yet to be fully realized.

Zach's Jimmy Drums

Drums: Tama Starclassic (maple) in cherry black finish
A. $6\frac{1}{2}$x14 snare (or $5\frac{1}{2}$x14)
B. 9x13 tom
C. 14x15 floor tom (mounted)
D. 18x20 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian
1. crotales (high octave)
2. 14" New Beat hi-hats
3. 18" A medium crash
4. 22" A Ping ride
5. 18" A Rock crash
6. 19" A medium-thin crash

Hardware: Tama

Sticks: Zildjian Super 5A wood-tip model

MD: Thinking about where you were just over a year ago, is it easy to handle all this newfound attention?

Zach: It's sort of hard to have a perspective on it; we're a little too close to it. We've been on the road so much, we're sort of in this "bubble." I don't think we've really had a chance to see how it's played out.

MD: What's your musical background?

Zach: I started playing in school band in fifth grade; I was playing saxophone, but I wasn't very good at it. My cousin had a snare drum, and whenever I'd go over to his house, I'd just play it all the time. It was a lot of fun for me, so I convinced my mom to switch me from saxophone to drums.

From day one I felt that I was a lot more natural at drumming. I started taking lessons from my mom's co-worker's son, who was about five years older than me. He was a really good, talented drummer and helped me out a lot. I think he kind of infused the passion for playing drums in me as well, as he was obviously into it.

My dad got me a CB700 drumkit when I was in the seventh grade, and I played the crap out of it for four or five years, until I got a Tama Rockstar. Basically, I played by myself a lot and along with CDs and tapes. When I got to junior high, I played in the jazz band a little bit. And that's when I started playing with Jim [Adkins]. He and I had known each other since pre-school; our moms were friends and he'd come over and play guitar.

In high school I chose to be in orchestra instead of marching band. I think that might have hurt me a little bit, in terms of my chops and stuff. I was the only member of the percussion section in the orchestra, so it probably didn't help me as far as my technique. But I think the experience helped me musically. It got me paying attention to the fact that drums and percussion are there to make the songs better, not to be the focal point. And I think maybe, in a way, that's a good thing. I still don't consider my chops to be that great. But I think I have a pretty good sense of how to complement a song, and I think playing in the orchestra helped a lot in that regard.

I was in a band in high school with Tom [Linton], and that band eventually split up, so Tom and I decided to keep going and bring in some new people. I talked Jim into coming over and playing with us, and that's how we all started. It was kind of the first time that two really great guitarists, out of everyone we knew, were playing together. It was a neat thing to see.

MD: So when was the band actually formed?

Zach: The end of '93.

MD: How old were you at that time?

Zach: I was seventeen. We all turned eighteen in '94.

MD: You guys signed to Capitol rather quickly!

Zach: Yeah, we did. We started making a record in '95, *Static Prevails*. We were young and the band was basically our escape plan—to go on tour. That's all we saw it as.

MD: So much for your "indie rock cred"!

Zach: Yeah, I think we were just guilty by association with the bands we hung out with. People saw us that way. And Capitol wasn't really shoving us into anyone's face. If you discovered us, you probably discovered us from the underground scene, and I think that's how it got justified. But we never had that "we need to be punk rock" thing. We just wanted to make good records and associate with people who believed in us.

MD: Were your influences from the underground indie-rock scene?

Zach: Yeah, I think so. The one band that influenced us the most is a band called Christie Front Drive. They're from Denver; they were sort of influences who then became peers. I think that band changed our outlook on guitar music.

MD: Was your earlier material more straight-ahead?

Zach: It was like pop-punk stuff—NOFX, J Church, Rocket From The Crypt. We heard Christie Front Drive and it was really melodic but still very powerful. We kind of changed our direction after that.

MD: What about your personal influences? Which drummers were you listening to early on?

Zach: I've never been about one drummer or another. I really loved Pat Wilson from Weezer for a long time. Steve Ferrone, who plays in Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers, has become a favorite. And of course, The Heartbreakers' original drummer, Stan Lynch.

MD: Ah, yes, that kick-back-but-still-rockin' approach to the kit.

Zach: Yeah, totally. I think that's what I like. I also like Dave Grohl, and I think, "Man, I'd really like to hit the drums that hard," but it's just not the way I play. But in a way he's a definite influence, as well as Stewart Copeland.

My style of playing is affected by the style of the band. It may not be my personal style, but it's what I choose to do within the context of our songs. It's a little hard for me to break out of that. The only time I play drums is with Jimmy Eat World, so it sort of puts me into a box right there.

MD: Well, *Clarity* seemed to find you playing a little more outside of your box. You can still hear a little of that in *Jimmy Eat World*. Is that due to your studio knowledge, or perhaps Mark Trombino's production influence?

Zach: I think it's both. I think we came along with Trombino at the same time. He's a drummer, and he's very involved in how the drums sound. But I think that I've definitely formed my way of doing things in the studio. If we worked with a different producer, it probably would have changed me.

Jimmy Eat World was really cool, because we decided to book a week to record the drums, then go on a three-week tour and come back to do everything else. Well, I had all of the drum tracks done on the third day. So we had four days left to try the craziest things we could think of, mixing it up and trying to be real experimental with our drum sounds. That was definitely the most fun I've had making a record.

Clarity was more experimental with more mallet percussion and other types of things I like to do, but I think the latest record was more fun. Like on the song "Your House," we set up a drum line with all of our floor toms and bass drums and banged on them.

MD: Was *Jimmy Eat World* your first experience at tracking an album to Pro Tools?

Zach: Yes. We tracked straight into Pro Tools because we funded the record ourselves. We were thinking, "Well, Mark has this Pro Tools rig, and if we record straight into it we won't have to buy tape. It'll also save us a lot of time." If we did this album straight to tape, we wouldn't have had enough time to make the record.

By the way, we A/B'ed Pro Tools with 2" tape, and Pro Tools actually sounded better. So we went ahead and used it. It's really amazing how it works.

MD: How particular was Trombino about your drumming in the studio?

Zach: I think he's pretty particular, but I think I am as well. We're in agreement when something does or doesn't sound good. We both know what my limitations are and how well I can do a song. That's sort of our stance on how to work. For the most part, as each record goes by, it becomes easier and easier as I become

Producer's View

Mark Trombino On Zach Lind

As the man behind the console for all three Jimmy Eat World full-lengths, producer Mark Trombino could safely be dubbed as that invisible fifth member of the band. After all, Zach Lind credits much of his drum sound and studio performance to the careful ears of Trombino.

Trombino's knack for recording started with his former band, Drive Like Jehu, for which he'd produced all their releases. (By the way, he was also the drummer in the group.) It was because of those recordings that Trombino earned his fame as a producer and had bands like Jimmy Eat World knocking on his door to track their sessions. "They came and worked with me when I was working in San Diego," recalls Trombino, who now resides in Los Angeles. "They did a seven-inch with me. They were fans of my band, and that's why they wanted to work with me."

It was during that first fateful session that Jimmy Eat World made the decision to use Trombino for future recording sessions—a decision that has resulted in a seven-year working relationship. And throughout the years, Trombino has witnessed Lind's drumming grow up right before his own eyes and ears. "I think he's always been a good drummer to record in the studio," Trombino says. "Maybe he's getting even better in the studio, because the thing I've always enjoyed about recording Zach is that he doesn't overplay. He keeps things simple and just plays the right thing."

Trombino agrees that Lind's playing style—clean, simple, uncluttered—is definitely his cup of tea. "As a producer and as a drummer," Mark says, "I just don't like flashy drummers in rock bands. Someone like Travis Barker [Blink-182] was one of my nemesises. All my favorite drummers have been simple players. Zach hits his meters really good and solid, and he doesn't push and pull too radically. He's consistent. All of his strokes are solid, and there are no miss-hits. And he plays all rimshots on the snare drum. He just makes my job so much easier."

Trombino's goal with Lind's drum sounds was to keep them as natural as possible, including lots of ringing toms and cymbals bleeding in all the mic's—goals not generally on the mind of most producers. "That's part of the sound for me," he says. "I don't like the sound of really tight, dry drums. I like to record in big rooms. Everything else is the luck of the draw. When I listen back to my recordings, there's a load of cymbals all over the place. It's probably one of my weaknesses!"

Though Trombino used 2" analog tape on the first two Jimmy Eat World efforts, since recording the recent self-titled album, he tracks everything with Pro Tools. "I'm a pretty big endorser of Pro Tools now," he says. "I'm kinda tired of tape anyway. It's a headache, physically carrying it place to place, aligning machines, and losing fidelity after so many passes. The sonic benefits of tape don't outweigh the advantages, ease of use, and convenience of going straight to Pro Tools. The stress level goes way down too."

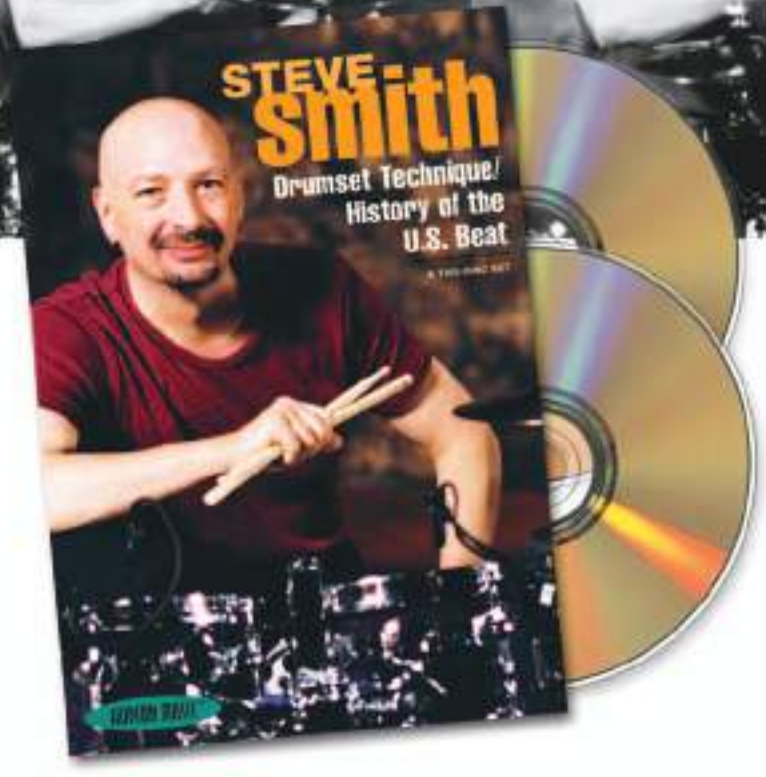
And how do the Jimmy Eat World records stack up against the scores of other albums Trombino's produced for bands like Blink-182 and Midtown? "They're the best records I've made," he says. "I was fortunate enough to have the time and budget to grow as a producer at the same time they've grown as a band."

Waleed Rashidi

STEVE Smith

Drumset Technique/History of the U.S. Beat

a two-disc set



Steve Smith Drumset Technique/History of the U.S. Beat is a brilliant, entertaining and educational resource by one of the world's most respected and influential drum artists. The double DVD is a virtual encyclopedia of drumming techniques and concepts— featuring state-of-the-art audio and video as well as special features, including a camera switching option, alternate takes, listening and reading lists and commentary tracks by "professor" Smith, himself. (MSRP $49.95)

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more experienced.

MD: Was Trombino also one of your drumming influences?

Zach: Oh yeah, big time. There are blatant drum rip-offs in our older material. I'd send him demos, and he'd say, "Oh yeah, Zach, nice little drum beat right there!" and it would be very similar to what he had played in his band, Drive Like Jehu. We always laughed about it.

MD: Is your drum sound Trombino's doing, or do you usually tech your own stuff in the studio?

Zach: On *Jimmy Eat World* I did all the tuning. But I think the way I like my drums to sound stems from working with Mark. That's one of the big things I liked about him when we first heard the stuff he did—his drum sounds. So he shaped the way I think drums should sound, and I tend to stick to that.

I like big-sounding drums. I don't like them tuned too high. I like to keep the toms sounding deep. And I like the snare to be pretty open. I try not to muffle it too much; just tune it as best as possible and go from there.

MD: Have you used the same kit over the years?

Zach: Yeah, pretty much the standard four-piece Tama Starclassic. I got a newer Starclassic kit just a few months ago, the only difference being a slight variation in the sizes. My last kit was a Starclassic, and I used it on every tour and for every record. It had an 8x12 rack, a 15x16 floor tom, and a 16x24 bass drum. The only negative thought I had about that kit was that the rack and floor tom were too drastically different in size; the rack was too small and the floor was too big—there was too much of a gap in between. So for my new kit, I have a 9x13 rack and a 14x15 floor. They're both odd sizes, which I guess some people have issues with. But I really like them. I think the smaller floor tom sounds a little bit more controlled, but just as thick.

MD: And you still use the same cymbal setup?

Zach: Pretty much. I've used Zildjians ever since I started playing. I've got a 22" Ping Ride—it's just a normal A—and then an A medium crash, an A Rock crash, and for my hi-hats I use two A Custom bottoms. With two bottoms, they never break and they have a cool sound.

For the most part, when I'm picking out a cymbal, I'll go to the normal A series right away. They just have an old-school rock sound to them that I like—not too pretty, not too ugly.

MD: Are you locked into using one snare drum?

Zach: No, I use a few different snares. On the road I use a $6\frac{1}{2}$x14 Starclassic Maple; I have two of those. I also have a $5\frac{1}{2}$" that I use sometimes. I have a Ludwig Acrolite that I used quite a bit on the new record. And I just got a Kenny Aronoff signature $6\frac{1}{2}$" nickel shell that I like a lot. There are a lot of snares I want to get.

Jim actually has a snare that he bought a long time ago when he wanted to learn drums. It's a Ludwig Ringo Starr reissue

> "I still don't consider my chops to be that great. But I think I have a pretty good sense of how to complement a song."

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from their Fab Four reissue kit, and we used that on a lot of the record as well. Sometimes I'll put up two snares, because for some songs I'll use the second snare—which I position to my left—for a tight, high-pitched sound to complement the normal, bigger-sounding snare.

MD: Do you use any electronics on stage?

Zach: Not at all. I used a little bit in the studio, but it was just for cheating! [laughs] But the only thing electronics-wise that I use on stage is my battery-operated click track. We just got in-ear monitors, and I have mine hooked up to a Tama Rhythm Watch. I thought I'd hate it. I use a click track in the studio, but I didn't want one for gigs. But I decided to try it, because after we did *Saturday Night Live* I saw a tape of the show, and I was so bummed out about how weird the tempos were. All of a sudden I started tripping out about tempos. I just had to get them right. So I tried the Rhythm Watch and just fell in love with it. Now I really enjoy it live.

MD: Speaking of performing live, you guys play a pretty intense set. Do you have any warm-up routines you do before you hit the stage?

Zach: About forty-five minutes before we go on, I grab my sticks and start doing rudiments, like paradiddles and flamadiddles. I'll play on anything. Sometimes I'll play along to music. I'll also move my sticks in the air, and that helps a lot because it really gets your forearms moving.

What I do on stage isn't that crazy, so I just want to make sure my hands are ready to go, especially with the newer record being a lot more straight-ahead.

MD: How much involvement do you have in the writing of material in the band?

Zach: Sometimes Jim will track a song and put some drums to it. He's a great guitar player, but not a very good drummer; still, sometimes he'll come up with some really cool stuff that I'll use. For the most part, though, I scrap his stuff and do what I want. Ultimately it doesn't really matter at that point in the process. Jim comes up with most of the core ideas, like chord progressions. But as for arrangements, I'm pretty involved. We all sort of inject our opinions and make things better.

MD: And how much playing do you do on your own? Do you practice much when you're at home?

Zach: My wife and I just bought a new house. We specifically bought one with a basement so I could put my drums in it. It's a finished basement, it has carpet and bathrooms, and I'm putting together a drum room where I can have a few kits set up and do the sort of things I've always wanted to do, like improve my chops.

MD: Do you think you still have a lot of work to do?

Zach: I *totally* do. It's like, I've been playing since I was ten years old. I should be so much better than I am.

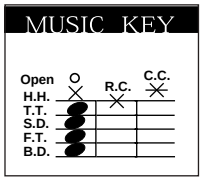
I'm looking forward to when we have a break from touring. That's when I'll have time to head down to my basement and get to work. I'm planning on putting in a few hours a day to really improve my skills and work on different things. Yeah, I'm looking forward to that.

Jimmy Eat World's

Zach Lind

by Ed Breckenfeld

Jay Blakesberg



Jimmy Eat World is a modern success story. Dropped by their first major label, the Arizona quartet's revenge is their recent self-made, self-titled CD featuring the smash hit "The Middle." The album's pop hooks infused with alt/punk energy have proved to be a radio-friendly combination. Zach Lind drums with power and taste, laying the perfect bed for his band's pulsing 8th-note guitars.

"Bleed American"

The opening track sets the rocking tone for the album, as Zach matches his rhythms to Jim Adkins and Tom Linton's power chords.

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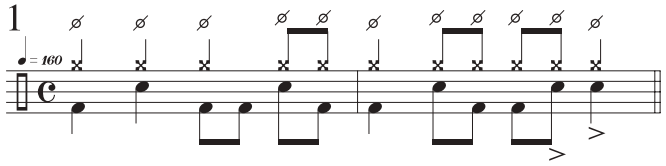
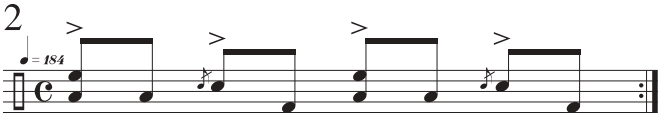
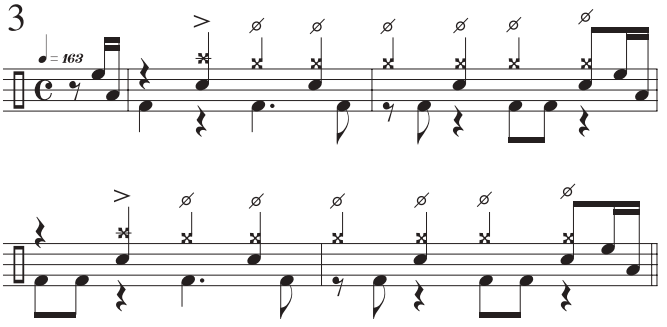


"A Praise Chorus"

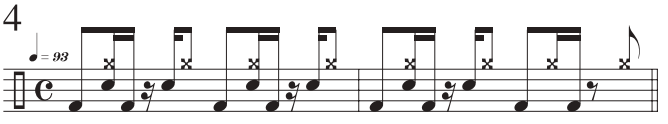
Zach's speedy, two-fisted tom groove slams home the bridge of this song. (The tom accents on the first and third beats are played as open flams.)

2

"The Middle"

In the breakthrough single, Zach sets up the chorus with a short tom fill, then locks his beat to the vocal melody.

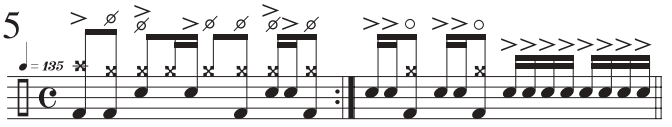
3

"Your House"

Here's a great, unusual pattern from the bridge of this tune, adding an almost-Latin feel to Jimmy Eat World's pop sound.

4

"Sweetness"

This hard-charging groove features catchy double snare hits on the fourth beat of each measure. Zach repeats this theme in the fill that leads into the choruses.

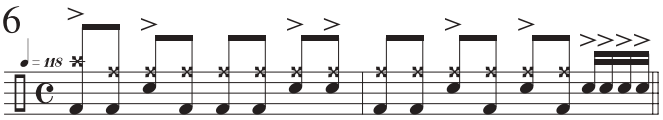
5



"Get It Faster"

Once again, Zach's drumming punctuates a guitar riff virtually note-for-note. This example is from the song's bridge.

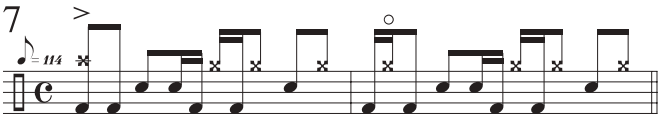
6



"Cautioners"

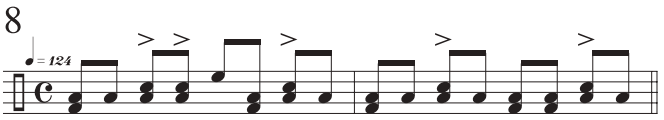
This syncopated drum pattern adds a mechanical undercurrent to this slow, dreamy ballad.

7



"The Authority Song"

Zach rides his floor tom for a '60s garage band feel in this intro beat. The one well-placed small tom note is a cool touch.

8

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Chad Smith

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Band – Red Hot Chili Peppers

Concerts – Lost count after 5,216

Last tour – 24 countries

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Favorite venue – Red Square, Moscow, Russia

Largest attendance – 350,000 Woodstock '94

Musical influence – My brother, Bradley Curtis Smith

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Milton Worthington

Years playing – Almost a whole year

Band – Sooky & the Insomniacs

Concerts – Brother's high school dance

Last tour – Hometown

48 kilometers on the family van

Favorite venue – Churchill Boy's Academy

Largest attendance – Almost 90

Musical influence – Chad Smith

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Thomas Lang

Beyond Mere Speed

Story by T. Bruce Wittet

Gigs

Robbie Williams
John Wetton
Geri Halliwell
Steve Hackett
Asia
Falco

Heinz Kronberger

Thomas Lang was standing at the door of his dressing room, waiting to take his spot at last May's Modern Drummer Festival Weekend. The thirty-four-year-old, Austrian-born drummer, now a resident of England, was an unknown quantity to this discriminating crowd. By rights, he ought to have been quaking in his shoes. Bigger names than him were nibbling fingernails backstage.

Since I was reporting on the festival, I introduced myself to Thomas, who was chatting with Elizabeth, his wife-to-be following a whirlwind romance. Was he nervous about his upcoming performance, I inquired? "No, not *at all*," he responded without hesitation.

I wasn't buying that, so I countered, "No, I mean, playing in America to an audience of drummers who have seen it all."

He smiled and repeated, "No, I'm not nervous. Actually, I'm looking forward to this." *Okay*, I thought. *Hope you're not a lamb to the slaughter*.

Of course, as soon as Thomas set sticks to heads, it became plain why he feared nothing. He was, well, *stupendous*. He was powerful, thunderous even. His left hand, with stick held in the traditional manner, cut like a knife, while his other limbs danced in an exhibition of rare independence. He had unique ideas, too, such as leading off on a Sonor Twin Effect pedal with a 32nd-note volley on a floor-mounted LP Jam Block, then mirroring that clatter with rolls across the metal rims of his drums.

No question, the thing that people muttered most about was Thomas Lang's footwork. It drew gasps from the crowd, and not merely due to speed. It was the distinctive patterns, perfectly integrated with his hands, everything so clean and definite. The thing you should note is that he can play all the scary stuff on a *single* pedal; the double pedal and new Twin Effect pedals are simply enhancements. For my part, the realization came that if Thomas Lang wished—and we will see he emphatically does *not*—he could be the next "drum gladiator" on the clinic circuit.

By way of warning, the following interview may hold a few surprises for those of you in pursuit of speed. *Forget it*, Thomas will tell you. Learn *control* instead, and speed will come. That path, he says, is the high road to freeing your imagination and, ultimately, to creating art.

Drums & Becken

Drums: Sonor Delite series in champagne sparkle or birdseye maple finish. (According to Thomas, "These drums have lots of attack with fewer mids. They almost sound EQ'd.")

A. 5x12 snare
B. 6x14 snare
C. 9x10 tom
D. 10x12 tom
E. 16x16 floor tom
F. 20x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Meinl

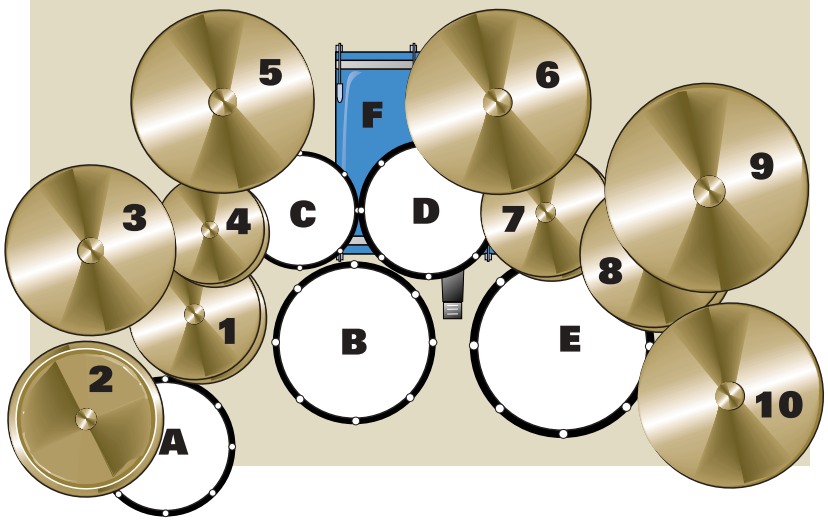
1. 13" Amun medium hi-hats
2. 14" Thomas Lang Signature Filter China
3. 16" Thomas Lang Signature Synthetik crash ("I wanted an acoustic cymbal that sounded like a sample.")
4. 8" hi-hats (Generation X Alien Hat top with 8" bell bottom, mounted on remote hi-hat pedal)
5. 17" Thomas Lang Signature Kompressor crash
6. 18" Thomas Lang Signature Signal crash
7. 12" Generation X Alien Hats (on remote hi-hat pedal)
8. 14" Amun medium hi-hat
9. 20" Byzance ping ride
10. 18" Thomas Lang Signature Kinetic crash ("Can double as a soft ride.")

Percussion: LP Jam Block on a Gajate bracket or ddrum pad (either played with a Sonor Giant Step Twin Effect pedal)

Hardware: All Sonor

Heads: Remo coated Emperor on snare batter, clear Emperors on toms and bass drum batter

Sticks: Vater Shredder model ("Anything else is knitting needles.")



Andrea Meister

MD: Did you have formal education on drums?

TL: I did my education in Austria at the Conservatory of Music in Vienna and the Music Academy in Vienna, and I took lots of lessons in Austria. The academy is a university. You have to take an exam to be accepted, and if you manage to get in, it's free. It's an old, established classical academy that teaches jazz as well. It's a world-famous school for classical training.

MD: *Nothing* you do, at least on the surface, appears to originate from conservative classical training.

TL: Actually, my approach *is* based in the classical tradition in terms of philosophy, and it's merged with the jazz tradition in terms of execution. When you train classically, you learn that the reason you learn to play a roll is to simulate sustain, which is something that most people don't consider—a roll is just a roll. My drumset playing has a lot of dense structures because I come from that background of trying to create sustained notes and pseudo-melodic structures.

MD: You play a really refined left-hand traditional grip. Was that courtesy of your early education, or did you later go back and re-examine hand technique?

TL: My first teacher told me that was the way you hold the stick, and that was that. I didn't dare think there was another way. It seemed natural and logical when he explained that it was an "asymmetrical grip," not that I wasted much thought at the time about what that meant. Only later, when I also started playing matched grip—which I consider easier and doesn't require a lot of training—did I realize that changing grips affected my *thinking* immensely.

What I find attractive about traditional grip is that I think differently when I hold the stick that way. The asymmetrical grip tends to trigger asymmetrical thinking. In other words, I tend to think less linearly. I think more complexly and polyrhythmicly and play things that overlap more. And the sound of a cymbal will be different because I muffle the stick differently with my hand.

MD: I would imagine that when you're playing triplet-based music it would be better to use traditional grip because of this "asymmetry."

TL: Yes, although everything is possible with matched grip. I can play anything with matched that I can with traditional—not as fast, though, because I'm a traditional-grip player. With matched I tend to think more rigidly and linearly: I bounce things from right to left and play simpler patterns. When I hold the sticks traditionally, my right hand wants to play certain repetitive structures, while my left hand wants to just go *mad*.

MD: Are certain grips more appropriate for certain musical styles? For example, if you've got to play with sequencers, I'm guessing you'd use matched.

TL: Absolutely not. I always play traditional grip no matter what I do. It feels more sophisticated and right to me. Sometimes for television I'll use matched and set the kit up the other way around, but that's just for fun. I feel I have more control with traditional grip, and I like that kind of old-school distinguished look, especially in a contemporary environment. I like the fact that this relic from the olden days has meaning and a place in modern playing.

MD: At a certain point, did you have to adjust your finger placement with traditional grip to achieve power?

TL: I did. I used to study Moeller, classical timpani technique, and Swiss grip. I experimented with a lot of variations. What I've

"What I find attractive about traditional grip is that I think differently when I hold the stick that way. I think more complexly and polyrhythmicly and play things that overlap more."

come to feel comfortable with is pretty much a "locked grip" on my left hand—a very tight grip with a lot of wrist control. I have the option to play with the Moeller technique when I don't need full power, but in contemporary situations, I use a locked grip.

Everything is coming out of my wrist with a rotating motion of the forearm. My ring finger—which is now *really* a ring finger, *whooo*, I just got married—is important when I bring the stick up. The index and middle fingers keep the stick firmly in place. My middle finger is "glued" to the wood of the stick and my index finger comes off for lighter things to give me a little more freedom. I'm trying to wrap the thumb around the stick—almost like making a fist with the left hand. It's the only grip I've found that works long term for powerful playing and keeping control. For fast doubles or singles, I loosen that grip a little and open that "fist" and lift my index finger off the stick slightly. But I still have enough control so that I don't worry about dropping the stick.

Andrea Meister

With my right hand, I play wrist-up and palm-down. I keep my wrist straight at all times; there's none of that "S" thing in the shape of the wrist and arm. I play the drum from the side: I don't consider it important that the stick is a perfectly straight extension of the forearm.

MD: Your grip reminds me of Tony Williams'. He talked about articulating every note. Did you see him play?

TL: Yes, I did, and his was definitely more like my approach. I hate bounces and things that are not controlled. I don't like things the drumset plays for me; I want to play the drumset! For doubles, I make sure I accent the second stroke, not the first. I hate the concept of not being in control and getting these bounces I have no control over.

One of the fascinating aspects of playing the drumset is having control over what you do mechanically, intellectually in terms of concentration, and physically. On drums, *everything* is about control. No drum book is about anything else. The concept of a press roll doesn't appeal to me. Neither does a double-stroke roll where the second stroke is a bounce. I'd rather accent the second stroke in order to be confident that whatever I'm playing is what *I* am playing.

MD: At what point did these strong views crystallize?

TL: Probably when I attended the conservatory in Vienna. My teacher, Walter Grassmann, reviewed my technique and adjusted it a little according to his concepts. At that time, I began thinking about grip a lot more, and it emerged that the grip is the most important part of connecting to the instrument. For a year or two, I experimented with various approaches to grip. I had a vision of the style of music I wanted to play, and I needed something more robust.

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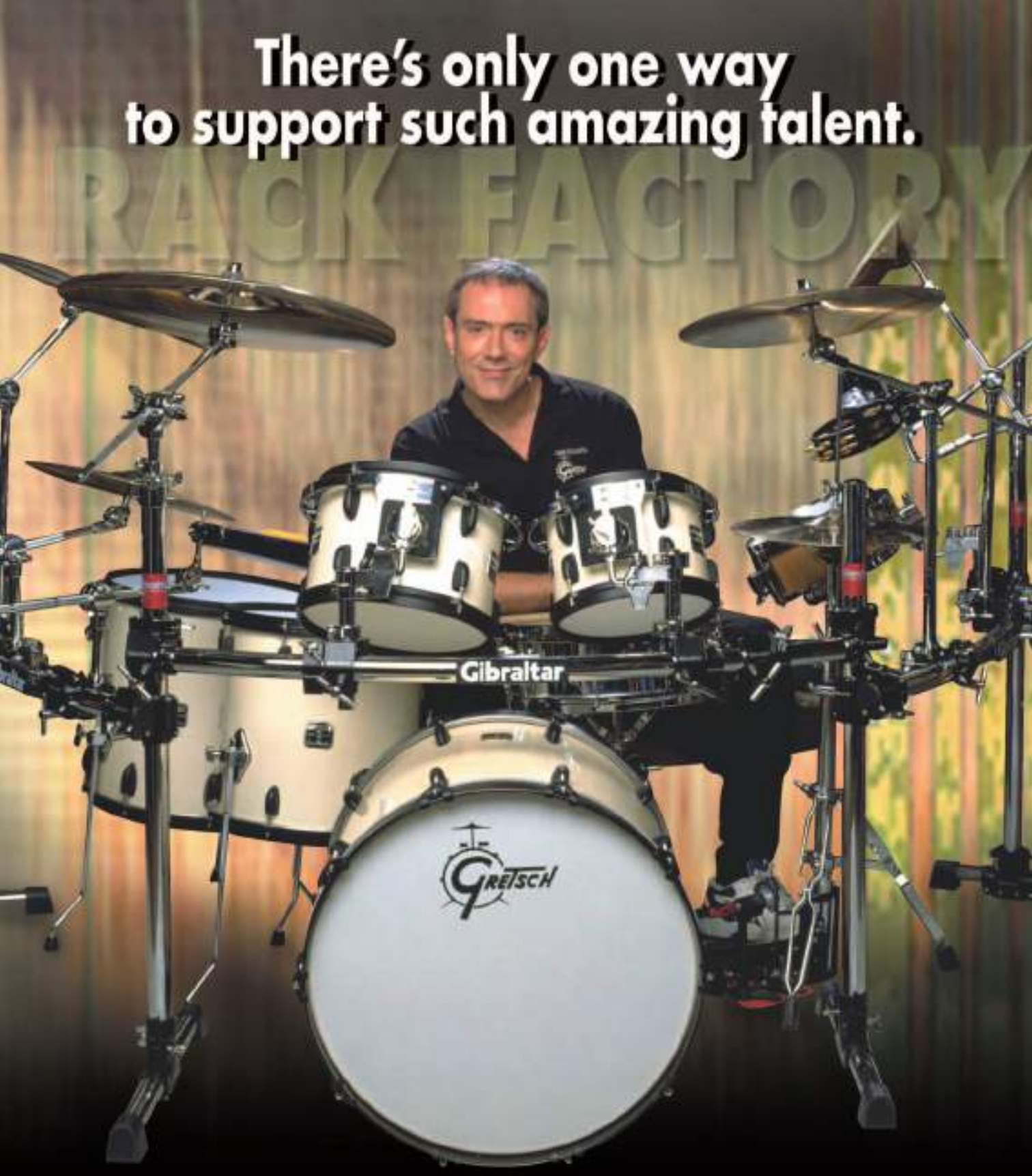

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Andrea Meister

MD: And what styles of music did you gravitate towards?

TL: I was a huge fan of any English and American music, like everybody else around the world. The Beatles were an influence. Actually, when I was four, I saw an American drummer on television with a huge blue sparkle kit. He was the only one who sat down. To me this implied authority. Everybody else had to stand up! It was cool. He was in charge and counted in the song, starting with this massive drum fill. In an environment when everybody was flower power, there was this perverse sort of control going on.

MD: I don't want to finger anybody, but few of those "big kit drummers" exhibit your level of control. You must be aware of that.

TL: Of course, and I object to the accumulation of instruments to compensate for lack of skill. I'm a minimalist and I don't like to schlep around a lot of gear. I just bring what I need to the gig—unless I'm doing a clinic. That's when I bring stuff I think other drummers might find interesting. I don't need more than a kick and snare and cymbal. It's not about accumulating a huge arsenal of sound sources.

MD: The art of your control is that you are able to suggest that you're playing a much larger kit.

TL: Yes, it's just a standard kit with a second snare drum. What my hands and feet are doing is more important than trying to spread that over different sound sources, trying to simulate finesse by orchestrating around the different instruments. Ideally, I

would be able to play something musically interesting on just one drum. Nobody in Africa a thousand years ago thought about assembling fifty-five djembes and playing some simple pattern on them.

To me it's more important to make sense rhythmically than with pitches or tonality. *Especially* with the drumset, you're reduced to two main pillars of musical expression: rhythm and dynamics. We don't have melodic and harmonic means to express ourselves; we can only *simulate* that by creating pseudo melodic and pseudo harmonic things. I find that a huge array of pseudo melodic instruments like toms is distracting.

MD: Your orchestral roots are showing! You're saying toms are not melodic because they're not definite-pitched instruments.

TL: Exactly. It means nothing tonally. It makes a noise. Some drum companies, and I don't want to mention any names, created a marketing coup by saying, "This tom is a G and this one's an A." But that's a lot of bull, and anybody who knows anything about physics would agree that you can never have a perfect pitch if you have two heads. Of the drums, only timpani have a definite relationship to tonality—and single-headed toms. Anything else is just noise.

MD: So on what basis do you tune your kit, if not to specific pitches?

TL: I like to hear melodic *references*. I tune the top head to where it feels comfortable to play. I use the bottom head for pitch. Each drum sounds good in a certain range, and then I try to get a certain harmonic balance and balance of sustain. I look for *timbre* more than pitch. If we're talking pseudo intervals, I would say I look for a pseudo third or fifth difference between the three rack toms. And I don't mind my toms ringing when I hit the bass drum. It's important that it feels right and that it projects. The larger the drum, the more sustain I prefer.

Lang Listening

While Thomas has recorded hundreds of albums, here are a few that he particularly recommends.

Artist	Recording
Thomas Lang	Mediator (Koch International)
B*Witched	Jump Down, Jump Down Live
John Wetton	Archangel
John Wetton	Live In Tokyo
Billy Liesegang	No Strings Attached
Vienna Art Orchestra	Art And Fun
Falco	Verbdammt Wir Leben Noch (Thomas also produced)
Willi Langer	Signs Of Life
Thomas Lang	Ultimatives Schlagzeug (German language instructional video)

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Thomas Lang

On my snares, the batter heads are tight—though not Stewart Copeland style—and I like to use fairly deep drums: 6". The bottom head is a lot looser because I like a lot of depth from my snare drum. The snares are fairly tight but not cranked up so they muffle the bottom head. The head will give when I press my finger against it. With some snare drums, I tune the snare-side head down so it'll wrinkle.

MD: Wow. I expected you to say firm heads top *and* bottom, especially given your great rimshot sound.

"Clinics are another avenue for musicians these days, but they're like extreme sports or something. Showing off on the drums can be misleading for young drummers."

TL: *That's* how you get a good rimshot sound—you get the depth.

MD: Everybody wants to know about your incredible bass drum work. Let's start with tuning.

TL: The batter head is medium or loose, not hard-feeling. Very little muffling goes in my bass drum, and the front head is almost at wrinkle status. This is pretty much what everybody does, I would think.

MD: When did your interest in hyper foot development begin?

TL: When I was young, this guy whacked a bass drum in church and that left an impression on me. Also the kick drum is the largest drum. It's the thing you see first. If you draw a drumset, you draw the kick drum first. All through my first drum lessons, I thought the bottom end was so cool. I got more interested in the details of kick drum playing five or six years later. I bought this book on bass drum control by Colin Bailey that was great.

MD: That's a really traditional book. What did you take from it?

TL: *Everything*. It was in English, and my teacher would explain it to me. My teacher would say that whatever I did with my right foot, I should do with my left. I didn't have a second bass drum, so I would do everything on the hi-hat. At a fairly young age, I got a grasp of playing with both feet. As soon as Tama brought out a cheaper double pedal than the DW, I got one and played with both feet.

MD: So did you play on it heel-down or heel-up? Is there some secret method?

TL: My teacher told me that heel-down was the proper technique, and that's the way I played. Later I incorporated the heel-up for the more powerful strokes. There should *never* be an either/or. It's always a combination, and my technique is completely based on that principle. And I always play combinations of muffled and non-muffled strokes. The bass drum deserves to be played dynamically.

MD: Tell me about your role in developing Sonor's Giant Step Twin Effect pedal, which allows you to play strokes both with your heel and toe.

James Cumpsty

TL: Mahdi Mille invented that pedal. Later Sonor approached me to test it, and I did a video for them. Up to that point, I had totally underestimated the effect that a new piece of equipment could have on your imagination. It turns your foot into two components by adding your heel. Unlike previous pedals that triggered a second hit on the upstroke, with this one you actually have to *play* each stroke, and you can play interesting and freaky patterns with just one foot.

MD: Before the advent of pedals like the new Sonor, did you investigate various techniques for playing multiple strokes with one foot, such as, for example, the Steve Gadd rocking heel/toe technique?

TL: I saw that on video and, intuitively, it seemed wrong to me. Sliding up the pedal seemed wrong as well. I find it a real handicap to invest any kind of energy in unnecessary motion. I put my foot on the pedal on a spot—I call it a target zone—that's a sweet spot. Every pedal is constructed in a way where it works most efficiently when played at a certain point. That's where I put my foot, and I don't move it at all, other than lifting the heel to play accented strokes. My foot doesn't do any tricky motion. When I practice, I concentrate on efficiency and controlling the pedal where it ought to be played.

MD: This harks back to your disdain for uncontrolled bounce.

TL: Absolutely, but my bass drum technique is not all single strokes. It's based on the binary code of drumming: singles, doubles, and combinations thereof.

MD: Are you capable of, say, playing 16th notes at a fast tempo with one foot?

TL: Yes, of course. You mean speed-wise? I don't know. I never clocked myself. The goal is to control my feet to the same degree as my hands. Being able to play relating and inter-relating patterns with my feet and hands is also a goal. For example, playing that common pattern—right hand, right foot, right hand, and so on—when I found my feet couldn't keep up, I would develop foot speed to be able to play those patterns.

MD: Could you give me an exercise you used?

TL: Alternating singles between right hand and right foot. Once I did that, I figured that my left hand and foot ought to be able to do that. It was important not to concentrate on bass drum speed but to correlate the bass drum with what the hands were doing. My hand speed was a model for what my foot speed should emulate.

If I have the time to sit down and practice, I don't work on speed. Speed just happened; it came with control. People say, "That's super fast," but the speed is only a side effect of having control.

MD: It's gotten to the point where people are clocking speed with a Drumometer.

TL: That's the worst piece of equipment! After the NAMM show, Virgil [Donati] and I went down to this "fastest feet" competition in LA. Those competitions are fun, and we went and had a good laugh, but unfortunately some people are mistaking it for music. There's no place for that in art. Speed chess is a bit like that. There's a quality to chess that's lost when you're going too fast—it's the creativity. Speed chess is about reproducing standard moves fast. You'll never have the feeling that the path was worth it.

MD: Your bio talks about numerous playing situations, and you've told me you're busy. But many of the technical drummers

get caught up in the clinic circuit.

TL: My ideal musical context is working with good musicians, where there's chemistry between the people. I'm not worried about styles too much. All music is good, apart from Dixieland—sorry! But my ideal musical situation would have a combination of structure and freedom.

I'm in the music business as well because I'm interested in entertainment. If it's a combination of structure and freedom in an accessible format—preferably accompanied by scantily clad female dancers—then I'm happy.

MD: You have played what some would consider "simplistic" styles—Geri Halliwell and Robbie Williams, for example. Do you feel you're "dumbing down" your technique in order to play with these people?

TL: Not at all. I couldn't play with any of these people if I didn't have technique. There's a bigger challenge in simplicity than there is generating mayhem. That may stem from the classical attitude that there's an equal challenge in reproduction, not just production.

MD: I'm going to press the point. What good is having your level of control when you might end up whacking 2 and 4 to a click in your phones?

TL: It's important because I'm often asked to be precise, accurate, and steady—almost machine-like—especially in contemporary pop music. Music is pre-produced and produced on computers with a lot of sequences. You need this analog person, this drummer dude, to recreate that in a live situation. So I need technique because it's all about having the control to simulate that feel, because it's important to the music. It is a challenge, because you really *do* want every backbeat to be the same, with no nuances, in some styles. It's a disciplined endeavour.

MD: Your bio lists Robbie Williams, B*Witched, Geri Halliwell, Bonnie Tyler, Mick Jones, Suicidal Tendencies, and Ozzy Osbourne. What did Ozzy require from you?

TL: That was studio work and was never released. We were working on new material, but then Ozzy went back to Black Sabbath. The reason I was asked was that I also write and play piano and bass. I couldn't do what I do without knowledge of music in general: I write music and produce a lot of pop music. I produced Falco, who was a big European star, and I've had quite a few things top the charts in Europe, mostly silly little dance pop things. I find *music* fascinating—not just drumming. It's essential to be exposed to a musical process as a balance to just playing drums.

MD: So your life extends far beyond the clinic circuit.

TL: I avoided clinics for fifteen years. Even now, I'm not sure about them. There's a drum scene and a music scene, and they're not necessarily related. Clinics are another avenue for musicians these days, but it's like extreme sports or something. Showing off on the drums can be misleading for young drummers. When I was young, I was misled into thinking I had to play fast and loud or whatever, which has nothing to do with a career in music.

MD: I've heard that you collect abstract art. Some people feel abstract artists do not require the same level of technique as someone who paints birds, for example.

TL: Art is not about technique. If Monet had splashed paint on the canvas, it would

still be Monet. Technique is independent of personality and means nothing unless applied with personality. When I play, I never think about technique. That's why I worked hard to become good—so that I'd never have to worry about having enough technique. When I'm worrying about technique, I can't enjoy the moment.

Technique is a necessity, like the alphabet. You need grammar to put things in the right order; to me, that's comparable to groove playing. The next step would be to learn a different language—a different style of music.

MD: Speaking of which, your English is coming along just fine.

TL: I learned it in school in Austria, and I've been living in England for ten years. It rubs off on you. It's important for me to communicate in as many languages as possible, music being one of them.

For more info on Thomas, visit his Web site at http://homepage.mac.com/sticktrix/x/home.html.

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Mickey Roker

Sheer Joy

Story by Mike DeSimone • Photos by Paul La Raia

Gigs

Count Basie
Ella Fitzgerald
Benny Carter
Dizzy Gillespie
Herbie Hancock
Milt Jackson
Lee Morgan
Sonny Rollins
Horace Silver
Stanley Turrentine
Joe Williams

There are people in this world who, no matter what the situation, always keep their eyes on the prize and try to see the humor in everything else. Mickey Roker is one of those people. He values family, the drums, music, and his community, Philadelphia. Known to many as "The City Of Brotherly Love," Philly is also known throughout the world as the "cradle of democracy." But to fans of great music, Philadelphia is also known as the cradle of many great jazz musicians.

Roker, like most jazz players, is a great storyteller. (His impression of saxophone master Sonny Rollins is hilarious.) The basement of his comfortable home is filled with his drumset, pictures of fellow musicians, assorted percussion, and a pool table. In fact, it was Roker's pool-hustling abilities that provided him with a way to make a living in the early years, when gigs were tight.

Many people know Mickey for his work with Milt Jackson and Dizzy Gillespie, impressive names for any musician to have on their résumé. But Mickey's career has crossed many musical lines. His playing career began in rhythm & blues bands and then moved into jazz, where he has worked with such greats as Stanley Turrentine, Shirley Scott, and Lee Morgan. What is not commonly known about Mickey is his impressive work behind some of the world's finest singers, including a stint with the famed "first lady of song," Ella Fitzgerald.

At sixty-nine, Mickey is as vital and joyous today as when he began his professional career in the late '40s. He and his band can still be found every week at Orlieb's jazz house in Philadelphia. And he still performs regularly in Europe and Japan. Without a doubt, Mickey Roker is proof that chronological age is meaningless in jazz.

Mickey first came to New York with saxophonist Gigi Gryce, and his next gig was with pianist Ray Bryant. Later, the drummer joined Junior Mance's trio, backing vocalist Joe Williams. "After I left Joe," he recalls, "I decided to stay in New York because I didn't know how to read music and I wanted to study. I got with teacher Charlie Perry, and he gave me my first reading lessons. I stayed with Charlie for about six months. Then I started working with Art Farmer, Stanley Turrentine, and Shirley Scott."

One of the best gigs to have in the '50s was a residence at the Hickory House. The restaurant was central to a lot of musicians' careers. "I got the job at the Hickory House with Mary Lou Williams," Mickey says. "I stayed there about seven months, and in that time I met a lot of musicians because they would come there to eat."

Mickey's studies with Charlie Perry began to bear fruit when he landed in Duke Pearson's big band. "My reading really improved from that experience," he says. "After that, I was able to get the job with Nancy Wilson, who always worked with a big band. The music is simple compared with what you have to do with instrumental music. Duke Pearson was also the musical director for Blue Note records, so I did a lot of records for the label with small bands and Duke's big band."

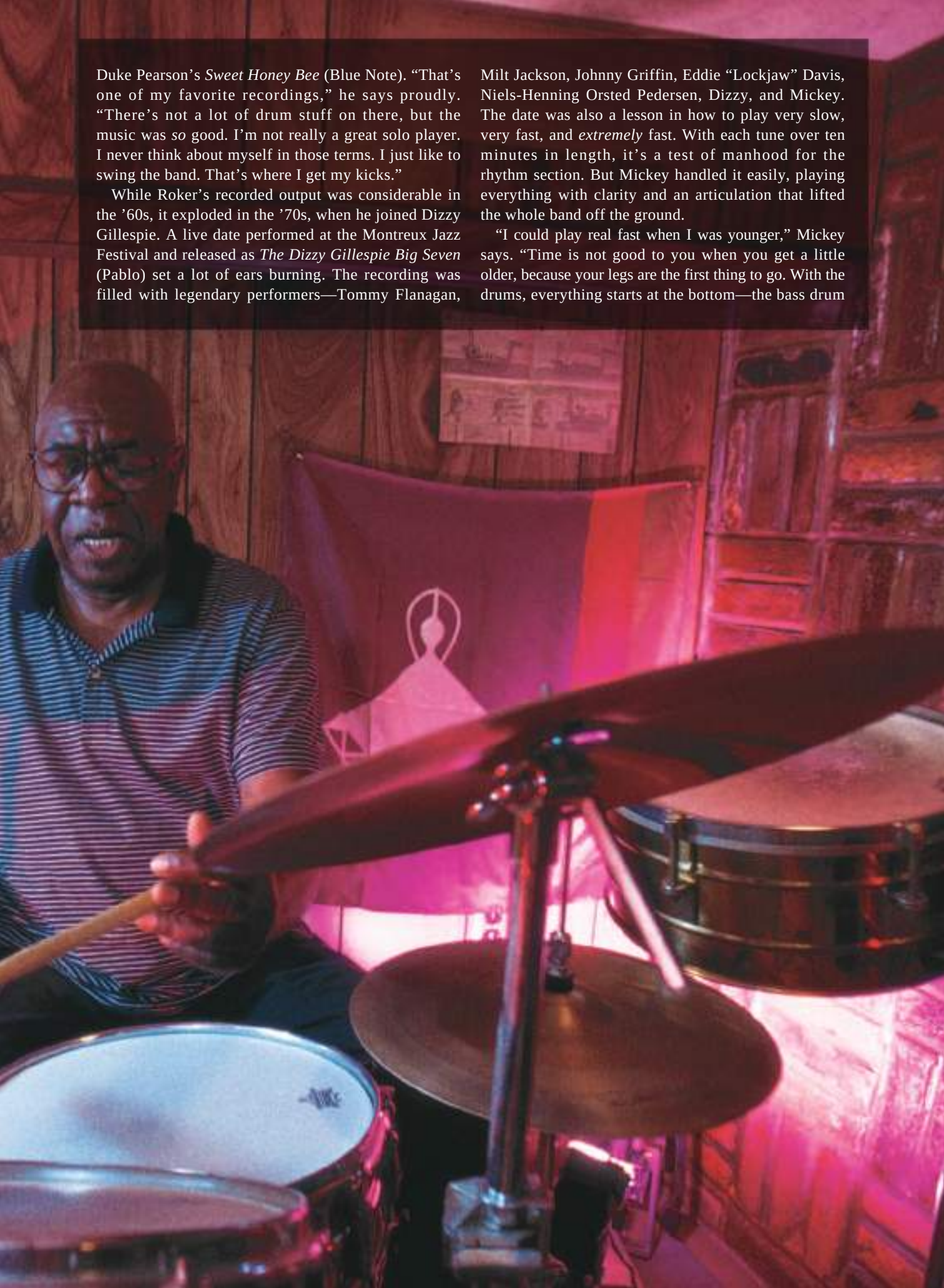
The memory of those Blue Note days brings a huge smile to Mickey's face, especially when mentioning

"Music is an expression of life. When you're young your stuff is more basic. As you get older you get a little more sophisticated."

Duke Pearson's *Sweet Honey Bee* (Blue Note). "That's one of my favorite recordings," he says proudly. "There's not a lot of drum stuff on there, but the music was *so* good. I'm not really a great solo player. I never think about myself in those terms. I just like to swing the band. That's where I get my kicks."

While Roker's recorded output was considerable in the '60s, it exploded in the '70s, when he joined Dizzy Gillespie. A live date performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival and released as *The Dizzy Gillespie Big Seven* (Pablo) set a lot of ears burning. The recording was filled with legendary performers—Tommy Flanagan, Milt Jackson, Johnny Griffin, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen, Dizzy, and Mickey. The date was also a lesson in how to play very slow, very fast, and *extremely* fast. With each tune over ten minutes in length, it's a test of manhood for the rhythm section. But Mickey handled it easily, playing everything with clarity and an articulation that lifted the whole band off the ground.

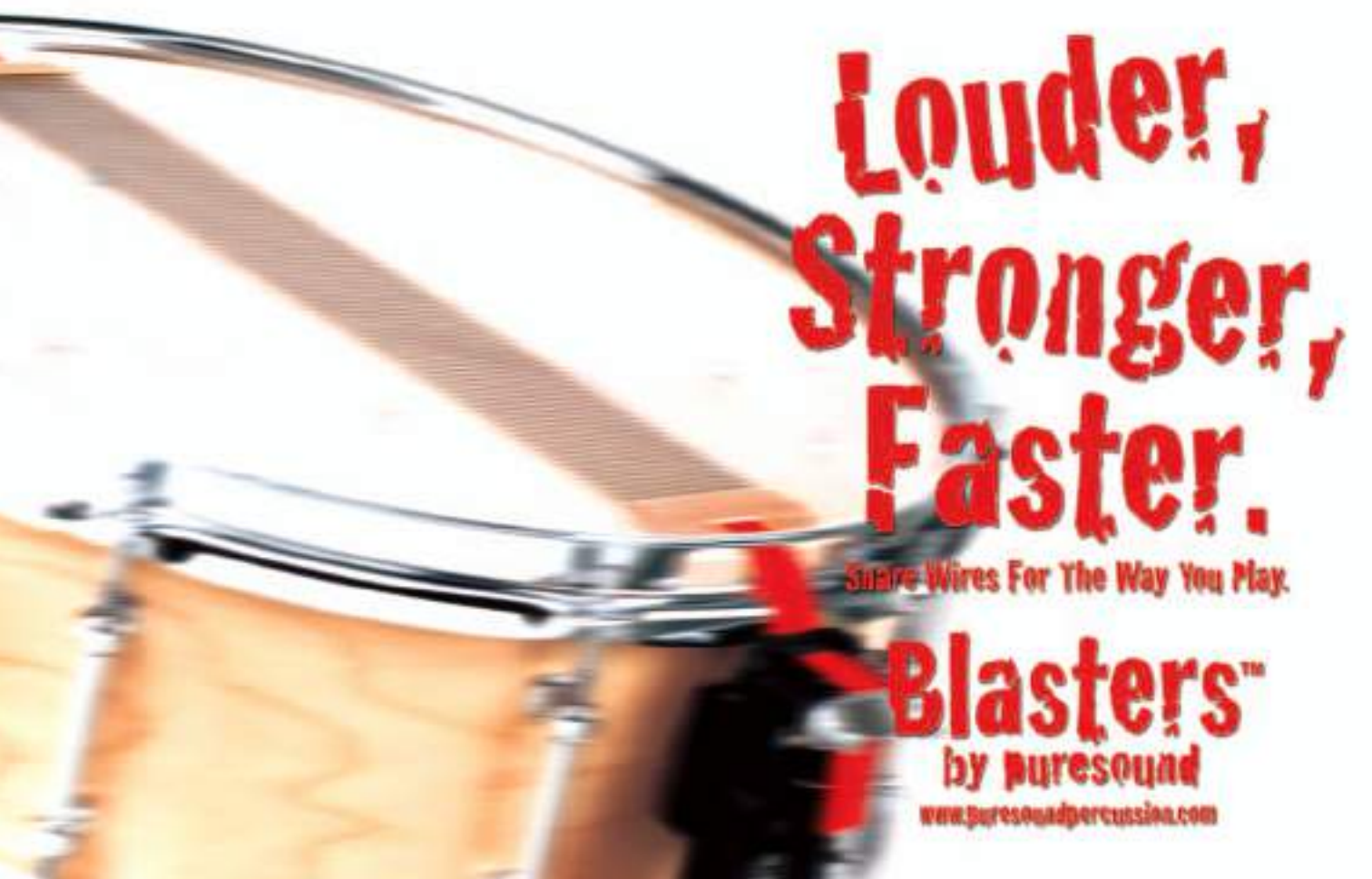
"I could play real fast when I was younger," Mickey says. "Time is not good to you when you get a little older, because your legs are the first thing to go. With the drums, everything starts at the bottom—the bass drum



and the sock cymbal. It's almost like being an athlete. If an athlete's legs go, I don't care how good he catches the ball. If he can't run, he's in big trouble. Everything starts at the bottom. It's like the root of a tree: If that bottom ain't strong, the tree will fall over."

Feathering the bass drum is one of the tools Mickey uses to keep that strong bottom going. "I like the bass drum to be more felt than heard," he says. "I can't help it, I'm from the swing era—Buddy Rich and Papa Jo Jones. They influenced my playing. Kenny Clarke—he released the bass drum by playing syncopation on it. But back in the day we had to play for dancers. And a lot of the time, there wouldn't be a bass player. There would be a tuba player or a piano player providing the bass line with his left hand, and the drummer

"To be able to express yourself musically and rhythmically, man, that's a gift from God. I don't take it for granted."



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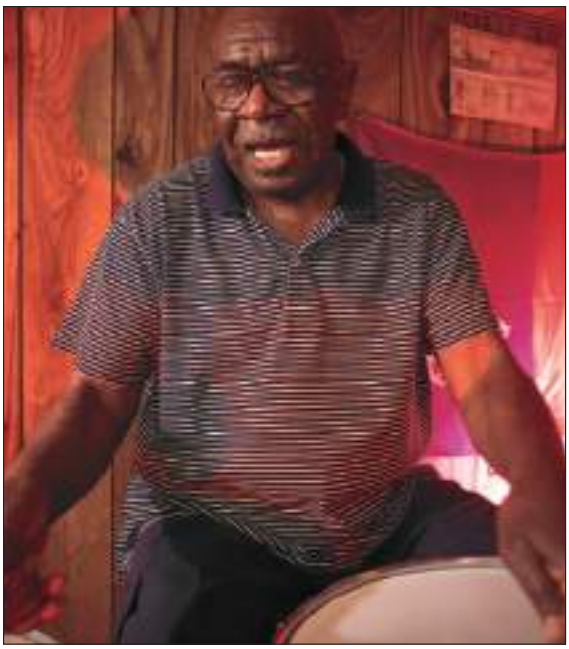
would keep the bottom going with his bass drum.

"When the bass fiddle came along," Mickey continues, "you were still keeping that bottom going. The bass was acoustic, without any amplification, so the drummer patted his bass drum and played it under the bass, and that made the heartbeat stronger. When amplifiers came along, the drummer could play more syncopation with the bass drum because there was that volume in the bass fiddle."



One of the great aspects of Mickey's groove is his strong dance sensibility. It's present in every tempo and style he plays. "I started out as a jitterbug dancer," he admits. "I used to go to dances every chance I got, because the rhythm was so expressive. I've been playing drums all my life, but I didn't always have a set of drums. I didn't get a set until I was seventeen. But I've been going to dances since junior high school. I noticed at dances that if there was a drummer who didn't swing, you couldn't dance. When the drummer swings, you can dance. And I don't care what kind of music it is—calypso, Latin, jazz, or country & western. Everybody has music that you can dance to."

Mickey has long been associated with many of the great players in the mainstream of jazz. It's to his credit that he was able to handle the more adventurous music of the great trumpet player and composer Lee Morgan. The double-record set *Lee Morgan At The Lighthouse* (Blue Note) showed an artist and his band pushing the envelope as far as they could. "We were playing songs by Bennie Maupin [saxophone], who writes a little abstract," Mickey offers. "Jymie Merrit [bass] also wrote music with time signatures in 7/4, 5/4, and 6/4. That'll make you stretch. You've got to stretch to keep from sounding too basic.

"Music is an expression of life," Mickey continues, "and when you're young, your stuff is more basic. As you get older, you get a little more sophisticated. When I was young, you could never get me to eat an avocado. But as I got older, I discovered that avocados are delicious. With certain things, you have to acquire a taste, and it's the same thing with music. Music is great, and to be able to express yourself musically and rhythmically, man, that's a gift

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from God. I don't take it for granted."

During our conversation, I asked Mickey to expound on some of his thoughts from his 1985 *MD* interview. Mickey touched on the topic of drummers having to know particular rhythms because of the continuing growth of world rhythms and innovative drummers from other countries. "It's been that way ever since I've been in music," he insists. "In the '50s we played boleros and cha-cha-chas. Things got more sophisticated in time. Instead of playing a samba like this [sings street samba], now it's played like this [sings drumset samba].

"When I first started playing in rhythm & blues bands," Mickey continues, "all we played was backbeat and shuffle, and I got bored with that. I'd go listen to different guys like Art Blakey and Max Roach. They'd be playing in 5/4 and 3/4, and I said to myself that there has to be more to playing music than what I'm doing. That's when I devoted my life to playing jazz. That's where you get to play all these rhythms. I can't play with my hands, but I love Latin conga players." Mickey might not be a conguero, but he's always been respected for his Latin playing, especially with Dizzy. His drumkit at one time even included mounted timbales, and his timbale playing inspired many musicians.

Relationships in music are always important, and no relationship is more important than that between a drummer and a bass player. "When I first began to play," Mickey says, "Arthur Harper was one of my favorites. He's *still* one of my favorites. Then I fell in love with Bob Cranshaw and Buster Williams. I also love Sam Jones and Ron Carter. I've never been on a gig with Ron Carter where we didn't play well together."

Another special connection is with pianist Ray Bryant. "We played together for so many years," Mickey admits, "and we're both from Philly. It's like old home week when we perform together. I love his groove, and Stanley Turrentine's too. I like to see people move when I play."

The Stroker On Record

These are the recordings that Mickey says best represent his playing.

Artist	Recording
Mike LeDonne	Bags Groove—A Tribute To Milt Jackson
Lee Morgan	Standards
Herbie Hancock	Speak Like A Child
Zoot Sims	Live In Philly
Count Basie And Dizzy Gillespie	The Gifted Ones
J.J. Johnson/Al Grey	Things Are Getting Better All The Time
Gigi Gryce	The Rat Race Blues
Junior Mance Trio	Happy Time

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One thing that was not missing from my conversation with Mickey was laughter, and one of the funnier moments occurred when he told me how he picked up his nickname, "The Stroker." "It doesn't have anything to do with the drums," he says. "When I first started playing around Philly, I worked with Jimmy Heath. One time I showed Jimmy how, when gigs were lean, I made a living. I took him down to a pool room. When he saw me shoot, he started calling me 'The Stroker.' And that's how I met Bags [Milt Jackson]. Jimmy said, 'I've got to take you over to Bags' house. He's got a pool table there, and his guys think that they can play some pool.' So Jimmy took me over to Bags' house, and I beat everybody up." Milt couldn't have been too upset, though, because Mickey went on to play and record with him for many years.

Another Roker associate, Sonny Rollins, is one of most magical people in the music business. Both his music and personal life are the stuff of legend. Though Sonny has been known to be uncomfortable in recording studios, most of his recordings have gone on to be jazz classics. *Sonny Rollins On Impulse* is no different, and Mickey gives one of his most outstanding performances on the date. Today the drummer provides some interesting insights into Sonny's approach to music.

"Rehearsals were called and the session was set up," Mickey says. "But then we didn't play anything that we rehearsed. We went into the studio one day to rehearse, and Sonny didn't show up. After a while we left. Sonny was mysterious like that. We called him 'the phantom.' He'd play the last note of a gig, and then you might not see him again until the next night.

"So, we went back to the studio the next day and started rehearsing a couple of tunes," Mickey continues. "But then Sonny just started playing other things. He never called a tune. He just started playing. He started to ad-lib by himself, then set a tempo, and once you heard it you came in. It was the same on stage or on a record date."

One of Mickey's favorite tracks on the *Impulse* date is the calypso tune "Hold Em, Joe." "Calypso is the first music that I heard in my life," Mickey says. "My father was born in Nassau [Bahamas] and my mother was from Columbus, Georgia. We lived in Miami, where there were a lot of people from Nassau. Every New Year's Eve, they had the Junkaroo parade. The people made costumes out of paper and they played drums and blew whistles. I was petrified, because I was a kid.

"As I got older," Mickey explains, "I started hearing those drums, and every year I would get a drum for Christmas made out of paper. One year my mother got me a drum made out of tin. But then the following Christmas I looked under the tree and there was a real drum. Man, I thought I'd died and gone to Heaven. It was a parade drum, and it was the best gift I ever received in my life."

It wouldn't be a *Modern Drummer* interview without the inevitable question about favorite current drummers. "I like Kenny Washington, Lewis Nash, and Mark Taylor, who's from England and works with Monty Alexander. He's a fantastic drummer. He sounds like Philly Joe Jones. You can't help but love Philly Joe. I don't try to play like him, but he did inspire me a lot."

Mickey has had his share of work with

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frustrated drummers. Two of the best-known, Lee Morgan and Dizzy Gillespie, even employed The Stroker. "Lee was a funny dude," Mickey chuckles. "He was a rascal like Dizzy. He always had something going, but when it came to the music, you're talking dead-serious, like a heart attack. He got that from Dizzy.

"Speaking of Dizzy," Mickey adds, "If you played his music right, you were okay. He *would* teach you. Dizzy was a much better teacher because he had more patience. But you had to be able to figure out what he was saying. He would say some stuff that you wouldn't understand until years later. He was that heavy, and he taught me so much. Dizzy had worked with one of the greatest percussionists, Chano Pozo, who taught him a lot."

Mickey began to tap out on his knees what Dizzy had taught him about playing in 6/8. As I jumped in to play the triplets, he laid a shuffle over it, showing the very close connection between African music and jazz. As we ended our little session, Mickey smiled and said what all of us feel: "Rhythm is beautiful, man."

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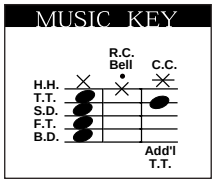
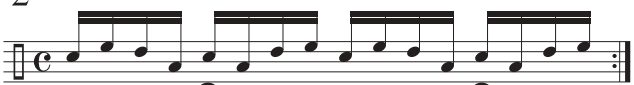


A significant aspect of the exercises found in my latest book, *Drum Set Warm-Ups*, is the often unusual nature of the patterns. Ever wonder why football players run through a maze of car tires as part of their workout routine, even though the tires are not part of the actual game of football? Obviously, unusual exercises of this sort have a profound effect on the athletes' overall physical abilities. Likewise, the following unorthodox, one-of-a-kind drum patterns serve the greater purpose of achieving overall improved technical facility on the drumset.

Examples 1–4 involve playing one stroke per drum or cymbal surface. The challenge (and reward) is to achieve pinpoint accuracy. Try to strike each drum in the center of the drumhead with equal volume and intensity.

1

2

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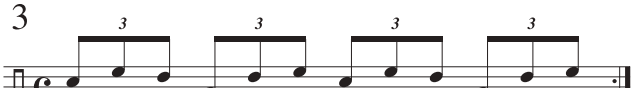
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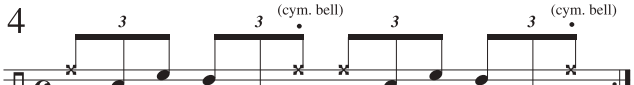

Examples 5–7 continue the one-stroke-per-surface idea, with the added challenge of playing accents. Each time through the pattern, the accent will be on the next note in the succession. For instance, with examples 5 and 6, the accent pattern is **1** e & ah, 2 **e** & ah, 3 e **&** ah, 4 e & **ah**.

5

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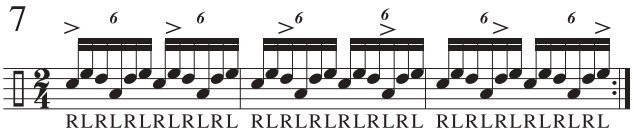
Examples 8–15 are part of a chapter in *Drum Set Warm-Ups* called "Cymbal Smashing," which gets *both* arms reaching for the cymbals. These are great exercises for increasing speed, endurance, and strength. In examples 8–11, think of the hand pattern as flams, with the hands alternating on each successive cymbal stroke. For example, in example 8, the ride cymbal is played with the right hand, followed by the crash cymbal played with the left hand. In examples 12–15, the hand pattern is essentially a flam tap, with the hands alternating on each successive cymbal stroke. Examples 14 and 15 alternate between the cymbals and toms in order to keep the hands moving to different parts of the kit.

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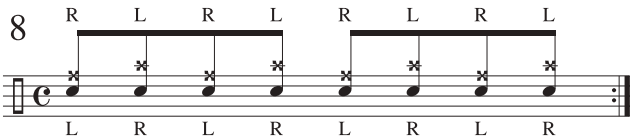

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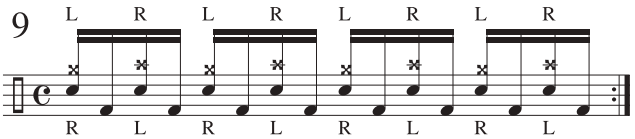

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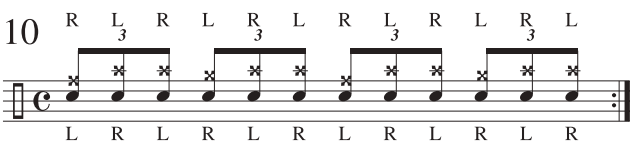

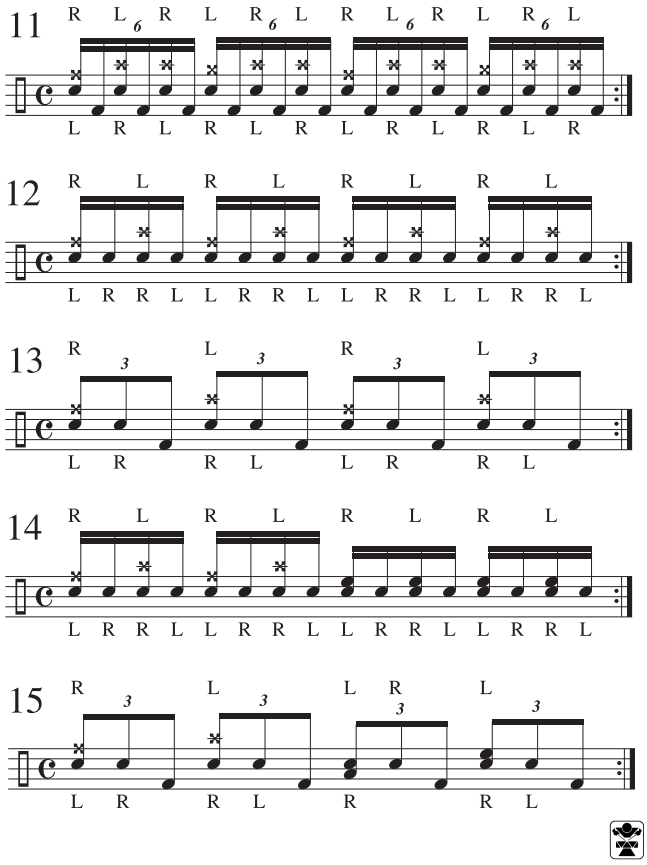

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Understanding The Language Of Music

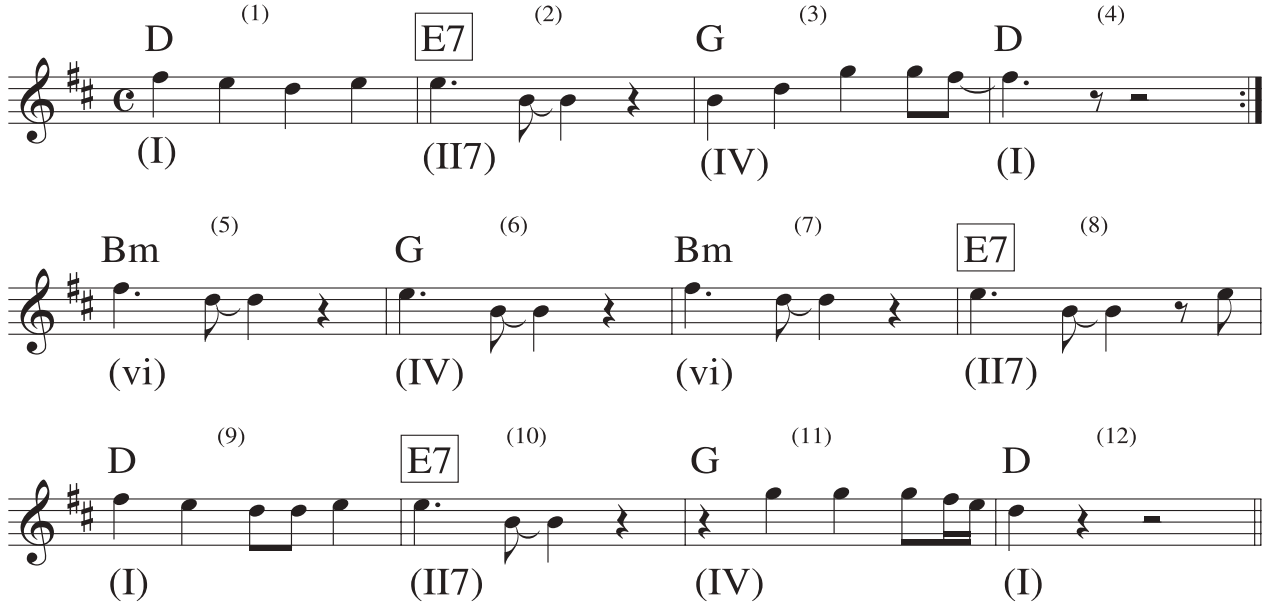
Part 14: Chord Progressions 101

by Ron Spagnardi

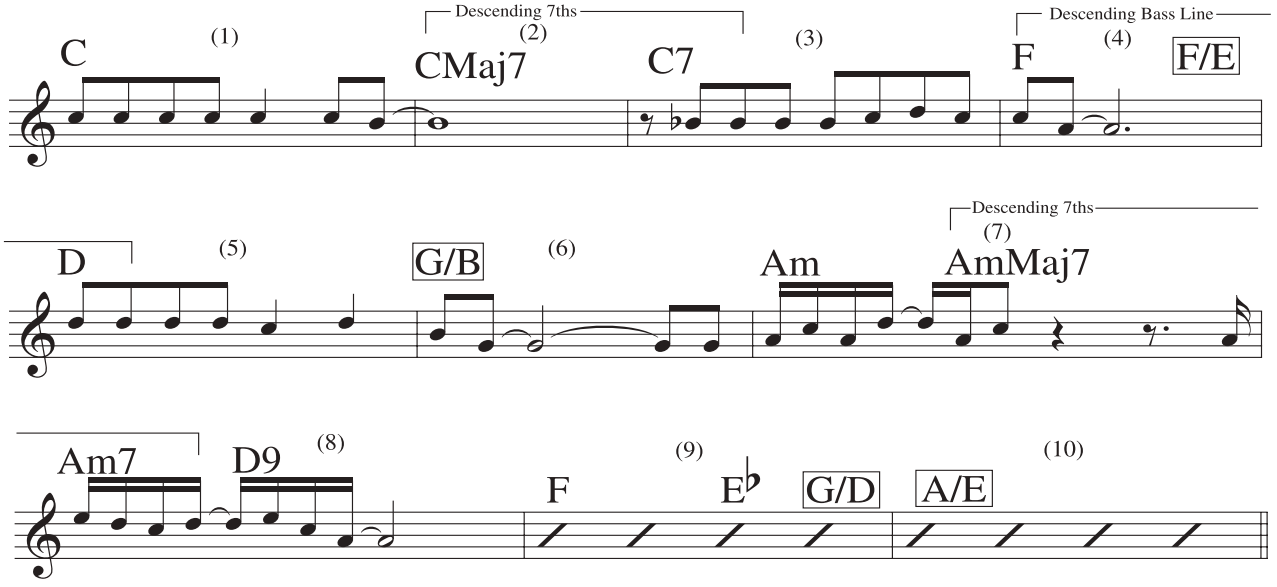
In this and the following installment of our series, we'll take a look at some common (and some not-so-common) chord progressions. Some of the progressions we'll examine have been used on popular hit recordings, rock and jazz tunes, solo improvisations, and a number of classic standards. Let's begin by going back a bit before we move forward.

Rock Retrospective

One particular chord progression was the basis behind literally hundreds of '50s and '60s rock tunes, many of which are still performed today. Here's the famous I, vi, IV, V7 progression in the key of C. Try it on your keyboard.

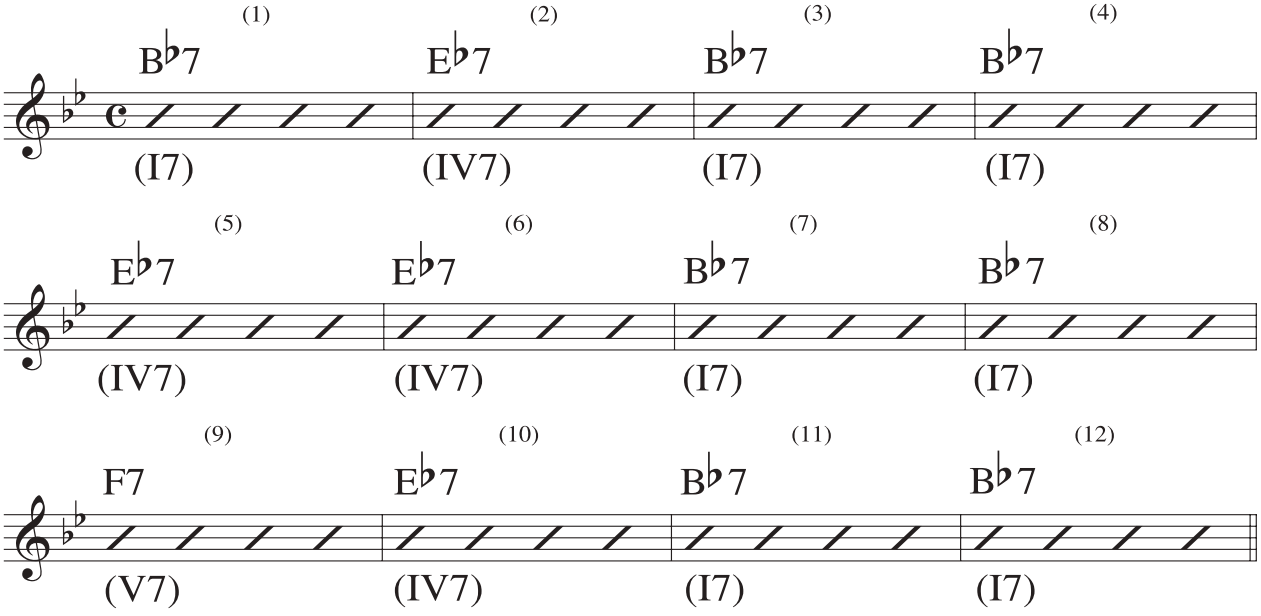
By the mid-'60s, groups like The Beatles started to move away from this overused progression and began to explore new harmonies. Here's a simple example from The Beatles' "Eight Days A Week." (Note, in the second, eighth, and tenth bars, how the customary *minor* ii chord in the key of D (Em) functions as a *dominant 7th* instead (E7), giving the tune a fresh harmonic approach.

The late George Harrison's haunting ten-bar progression on "Something" is also worthy of analysis. Notice in the following example the descending 7ths in bars two and three with the CMaj7 (C, E, G, B) to C7 (C, E, G, B♭) progression, and again in bars seven and eight with the AmMaj7 (A, C, E, G#) to Am7 (A, C, E, G). The descending bass line (F, E, D) is another effective harmonic device used in measures four and five.

Occasionally a composer will request that a specific bass note be played, indicating this through the use of a slash chord. The F slash E (F/E) in bar four is a typical slash chord designation, indicating an F chord with the major 7th (E) in the bass. You'll find more slash chords in measures six (G/B), nine (G/D), and ten (A/E). Notes other than the root in the bass, specified via slash chords, are used to achieve stronger bass lines and smoother voice leading.



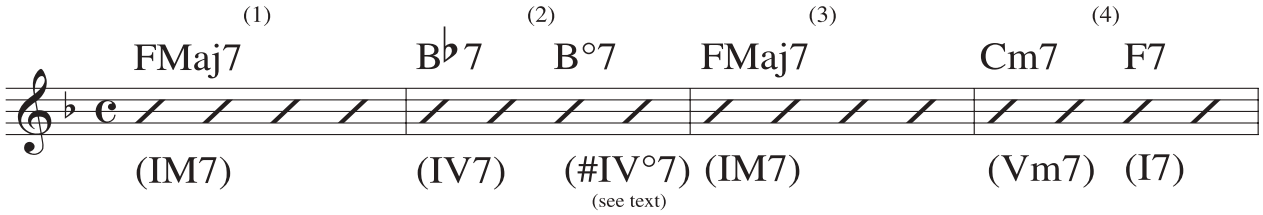
Birth Of The Blues

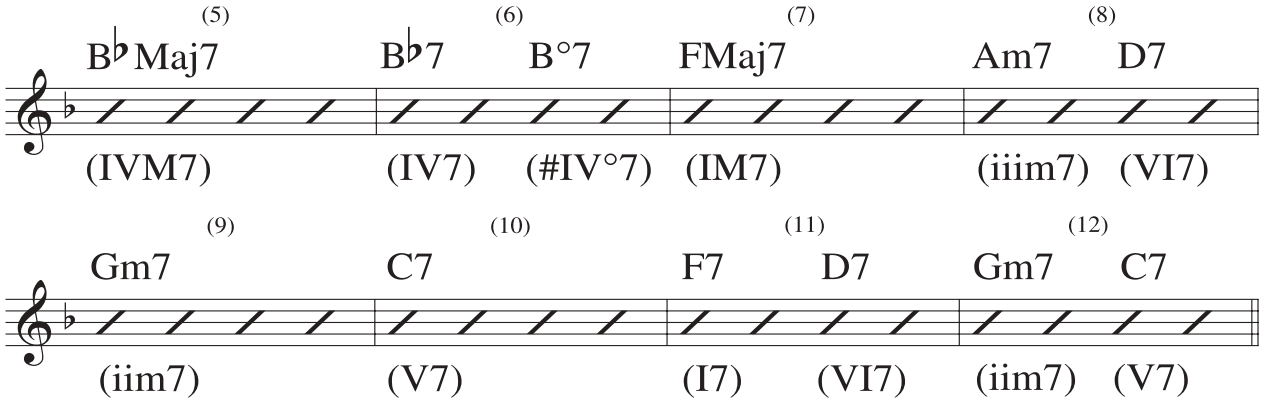
Rock and jazz musicians have been writing tunes and improvising solos on the twelve-bar blues progression since the early 20th century. The basic blues progression consists of nothing more than all dominant I, IV, and V chords. Here's the progression in the key of B♭. Try it in a few other keys using the Roman numeral system (shown beneath each measure) after you've mastered it in B♭.



Chord substitution (replacing one chord for another) is common in blues progressions, and over the years musicians have devised hundreds of versions. The next example, common among jazz players, is a much hipper version of the basic blues progression.

Notice how the Roman numerals make it much easier to transpose the progression into other keys. Of course, when using the Roman numeral system, it's essential to pay careful attention to the upper- and lower-case spellings that indicate whether the chord is a major 7th or a minor 7th (M = major 7th, m = minor 7th).





Note: The #IV°7 chord in measure two is not as complicated as it first appears. Take it one step at a time: Since B♭ is the IV chord in the key of F, the root of the #IV chord now becomes B natural. The ° and 7 symbols simply tell us that it's a full-diminished 7th chord. Thus, the chord is spelled B, D, F, G#. Simple!

Next month we'll examine some bebop and modal chord progressions, along with the progressions on a few standard tunes that have stood the test of time.

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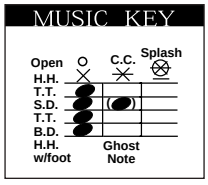
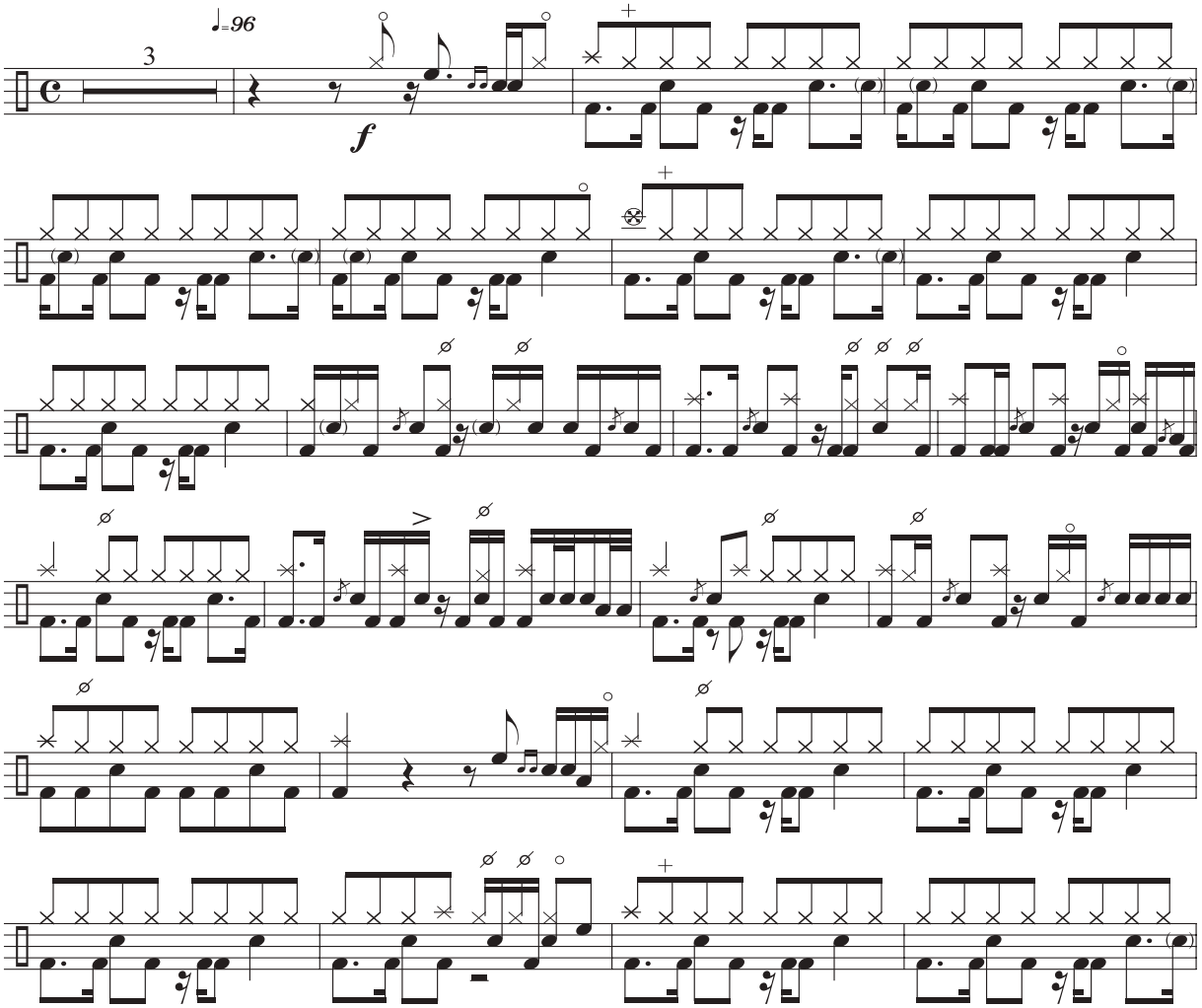
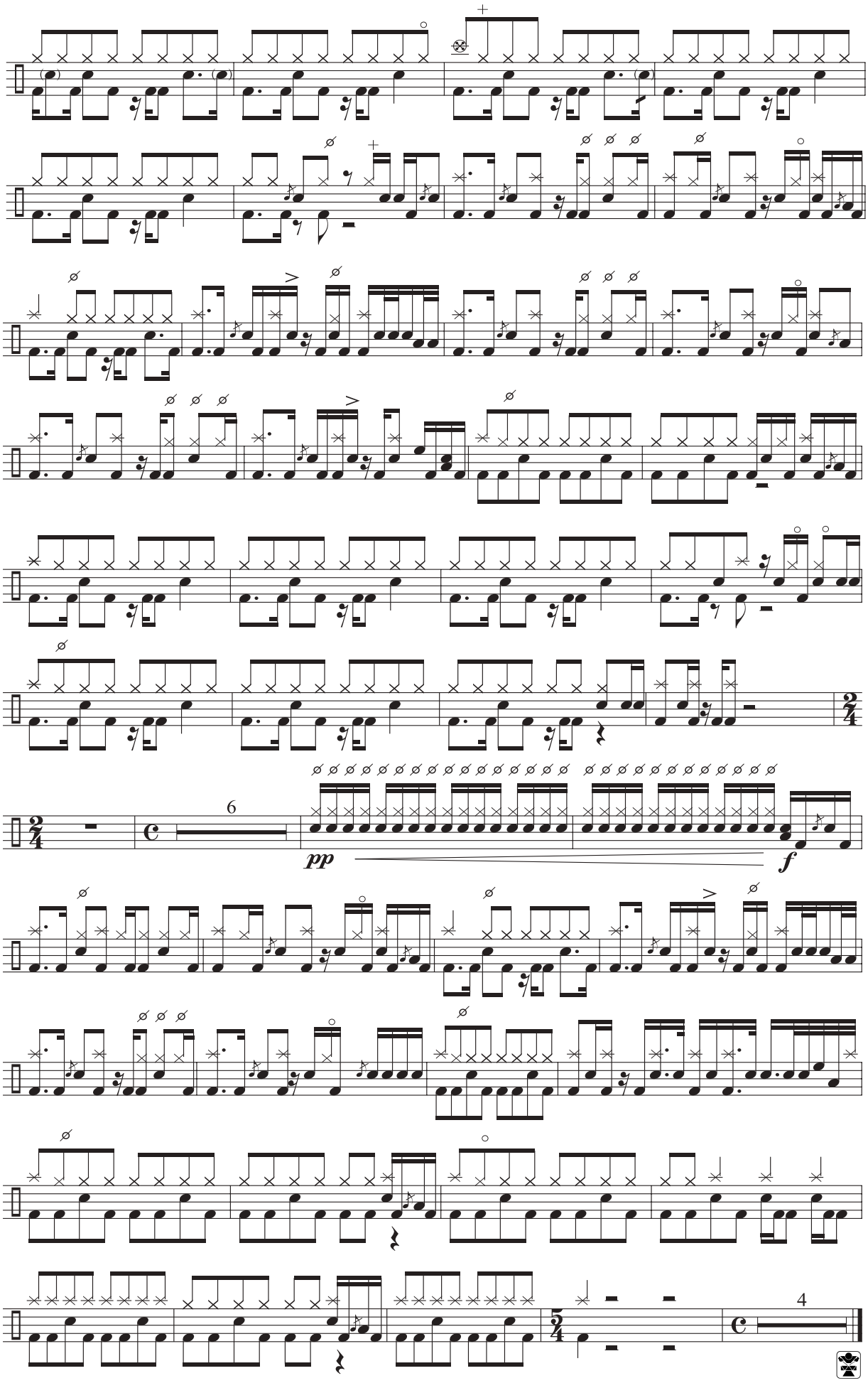
Default's
Danny Craig
"Wasting My Time"

Transcribed by Joe Bergamini



This month's *Rock Charts* features the medium-tempo hit single "Wasting My Time" by Default, featuring drummer Danny Craig. The groove on this song is well played by Craig. Be sure to listen to how good he makes everything feel on this track. Although the transcription shows some 32nd-note fills and other syncopations, nothing sounds busy or rushed.

Something else to listen for here is Danny's use of the hi-hat. He plays it loosely in many parts of the song, but with varying inflections to keep it interesting. Danny also utilizes some well-placed ghost notes.

No ride cymbal is present in this song, but there is a splash cymbal used in a couple of places in the verses. The choruses feature a drum riff that goes along with the guitar, combining accents and fills to create an ensemble-oriented part that fits the song nicely.

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Martial Arts For Today's Drummer

Part 2: Motion, Power, And Flow

Story by Dave Fusco
Photos by Steve Adams

Illustration by Joe King

Last month we explored ways to achieve optimum balance while seated at your drumset. We discussed the center point of the body (the tanden) and how to achieve a balance point that supports relaxed, flowing, and powerful movements. Now let's take a closer look at movement itself.

You're at the beach, standing in the ocean in water just above your thighs. You're enjoying the warmth of the sunshine and the beauty of the light as it sparkles across the sea. As you gaze out at the horizon, a small wave rolls slowly towards you. Lost in the peace of the moment, and not paying attention, the wave crests and hits you in the chest, knocking you flat on your back. The next thing you know you're tumbling in a storm of water, sand, and stones as you try to get your bearings and find the surface. When you finally sit up and gasp in a breath, you find that you've been driven into the beach.

If you've ever had such an experience, you may have been surprised at how a small, slow-moving wave generated so much power. While there are many complex physical concepts at work in this scenario, we'll concentrate on four basic principles. The first three are mass, gravity, and circular energy (or torque). The fourth principle is a blend of the first three that creates an "unfurling" or "whip-like" effect.

These four principles form the basic "power principles" of the martial arts. Their application to human motion allows the martial artist to generate extraordinary power, yet remain relaxed and flowing.

The power principles can be applied to the movement of one's entire body, or to the movement of a single limb. As drummers, we can apply these principles to the movement of our arms, hands, legs, and feet to explore a new level of physical competence and relaxed flow on the drumset. We can use the power principles to execute rudiments, rolls, and grooves with more power, greater control, and less effort.

The Basic Power Principles

In the wave scenario, the first thing that gave the wave its power was the sheer mass of water moving toward the beach. We'll call this principle "backup mass." In the martial arts, backup mass refers to the mass of one's body moving in a horizontal plane. In short, the martial artist uses his or her body weight in a linear manner behind a technique, in order to enhance the power of that technique. In drumming, we can use the mass of our limbs to enhance the power delivered to our strokes.

The second principle, "blending with gravity" in martial arts terms, is backup mass working in a vertical plane. As the wave swelled and crested, gravity pulled the mass of water downward with significant impact. You can imagine how a martial artist might bring his or her body weight down on an opponent to execute a strike with great force. Obviously, this power principle is at work each time we strike our drums. The key is to learn to let the weight of one's arm add power to the stroke, thereby reducing muscle action and tension.

The third principle in the scenario was the wave's curling motion. Such rotational

When a whip is cracked, the tip unfurls from its circular pattern with stunning force. This motion is the key to the application of power principles in drumming.

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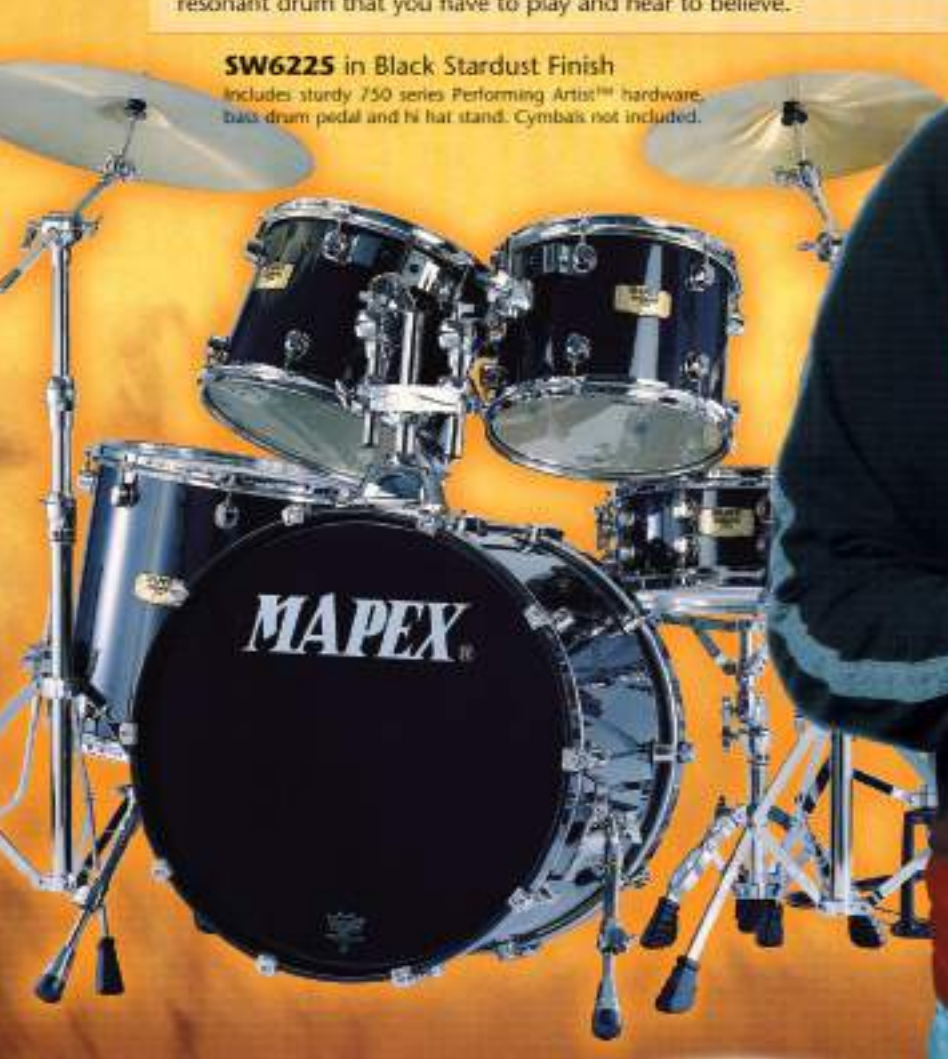

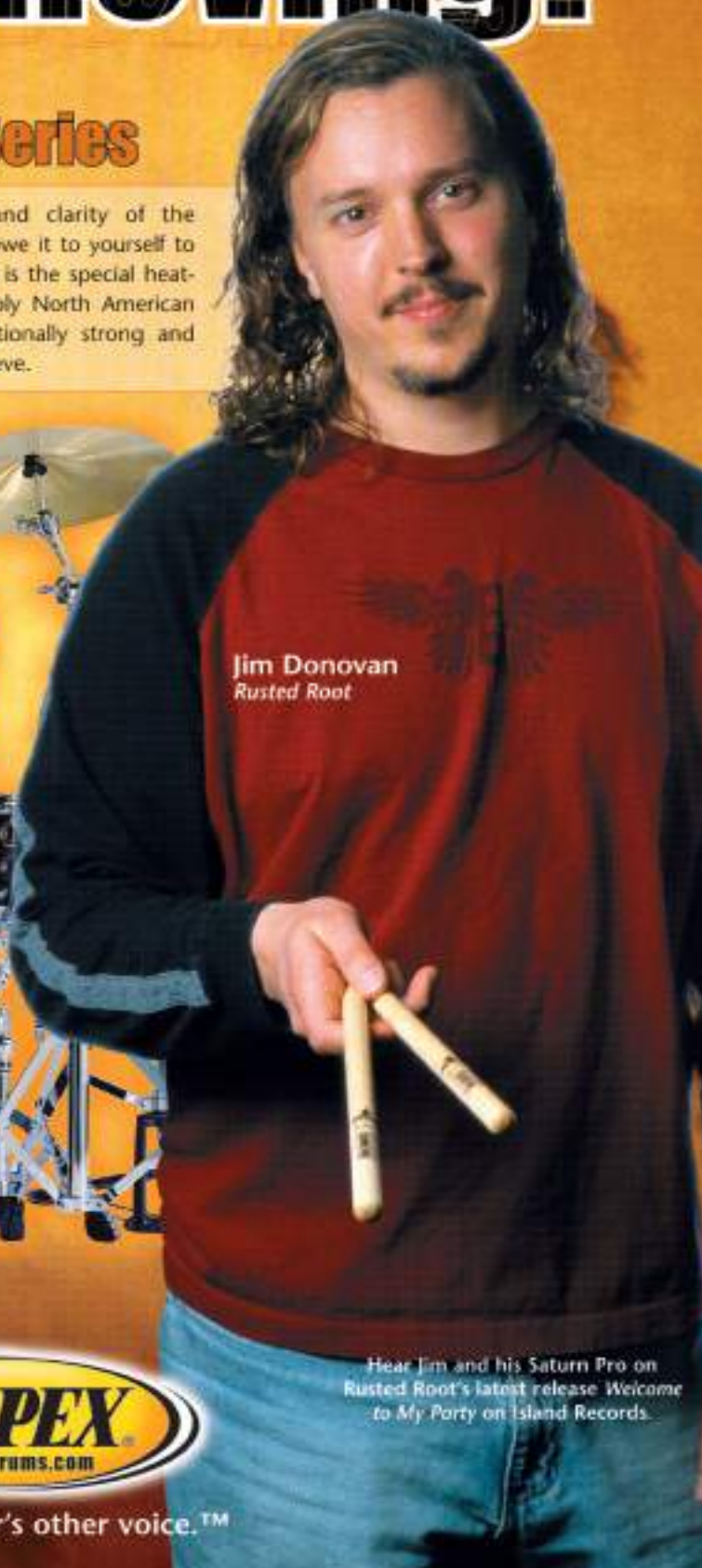

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movement, or "torque," can yield a tremendous amount of energy. In the martial arts, a snapping pivot of the hips, dynamic rotation of the torso, or the circular movement of one's limbs can be used to transmit significant energy to a technique. Torque is at work throughout drum play—from the movement of our wrists to the rotation of our torsos when moving around the kit. It's important to learn and understand how circular motion can build and transfer energy.

The fourth principle combines the circular movements of torque with the linear movements of backup mass and blending with gravity to create an unfurling or whip-like effect. As the wave rolled toward shore, it began to unfurl with more linear motion, driving the mass of water forward.

As another example, consider the movement of a bullwhip. As the whip is drawn back, it curls, building energy. When the whip is "cracked," the tip unfurls from its circular pattern in a linear fashion, striking out with stunning force. This whip-like or wave-like motion is the key to the application of the power principles in drumming.

Here's a visualization exercise to help illustrate this point. Imagine a drumstick tied to the end of a bullwhip. How does the stick move as the whip is cracked? Next, imagine the drumstick held loosely in your hand, but now your hand, wrist, and forearm have the wave-like flow of the whip. How does the drumstick move?

Power Principles And The Moeller Technique

There's a lot of talk about the Moeller technique in the drumming world today. Performers, clinicians, and teachers are praising its advantages in terms of power, speed, efficiency, and endurance. Certainly Mr. Moeller, like the martial artist, was a student of human anatomy and movement.

Human beings are bio-machines. Our movement is based on the actions of our muscles upon levers attached to hinges and ball-joints (our bones). Although each of us differs in our ultimate range of motion and physical ability, our body mechanics are regulated by the limits of our anatomy. By studying movement during the act of drumming, Moeller discovered that applying certain principles to human mechanics enabled drummers to play more powerfully for longer periods of time, with less effort.

The principle that Moeller revealed was, in essence, the whip or wave effect described above. Moeller proposed a wave-like motion of the arm, wrist, and hand, anchored by a relaxed natural bend in the elbow, that would allow the drumstick to rebound from the drumhead in such a way as to lead into the next wave-like motion. The drummer's wrist and fingers within the wave movement could control the number of times the drumstick struck the head on its rebounds.

Martial artists have been using this same wave-like movement for centuries. The following is a simple martial art exercise that will help you understand and practice this important motion. You can do this exercise standing naturally, seated on your drum throne, or standing in the horse stance position described in last month's article.

Start by allowing your arms to hang naturally at your sides. Begin with either your right or left arm. Bend it at the elbow and bring your forearm up, palm down, so that it is parallel to the floor. Your elbow should be bent about 90° and remain relaxed. Make sure your hand also remains relaxed. It

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should be naturally bent at the wrist, with your fingers dangling loosely.

You are now going to execute a martial arts technique called "shape of the crane." In practice, this technique is used for blocking, striking, or hooking with the wrist. From the bent-arm position above, straighten your fingers and bring your fingertips together. Apply slight tension to hold the position. Next, bend your wrist downward, toward your forearm, as far as your comfortable range allows. Again, apply slight tension to your muscles to hold the position. Your forearm and hand should now look bird-like, like the neck and head of a crane (photo 1).

The next steps are a flowing exercise that illustrates the wave-like motion of the hand. This is also a great way to strengthen and stretch your wrists and hands for drumming. Here's a tip: The key to the exercise is to lead with your wrist.

Position 1: From the "crane" position, raise your arm slowly, driving the top of your wrist-bone toward the ceiling. Inhale through your nose as you do this. Stop the upward motion when your wrist is slightly above your shoulder. Keep your elbow bent naturally. You'll find that your elbow will move forward and upward as you raise your arm. This is okay. You just want your elbow to feel comfortably "anchored," yet relaxed. Do not let your arm drift out from your side. A form of backup mass is at work as the wrist is driven upward.

Position 2: Release the crane position and open your fingers. As you do this, flex your wrist so the heel of your hand moves downward and your fingers move up and back toward your forearm. At the same time, begin to lower your arm. Keep your elbow close to your side in its natural bend. It will move down and backward as you lower your arm. Lead with your wrist and the heel of your hand. Exhale slowly through your mouth.

You're now executing a martial arts technique called a "downward palm heel" (photo 2). Try to feel the "blending" of your hand and arm with gravity. As you move your arm downward, you should feel as if you're trying to compress a large spring with the heel of your hand. Don't lock your elbow at the bottom of the motion. Your arm should remain slightly bent.

Repeat this exercise several times in a vertical plane, moving up and down, flowing between position 1 (the crane) and position 2 (the downward palm heel). Try it with some tension in your muscles, and then try it in a totally relaxed manner. Increase the speed of the exercise. Make sure you lead with your wrist. You will notice that your forearm, wrist, and hand are cycling through a wave-like motion. Now try the movements with a little snap in the wrist. Do you see the whip?

Try the exercise with the other arm, then alternating arms, and then with both arms simultaneously. Change the plane of the exercise. Move your arms horizontally or diagonally. In the latter case, lead outward with the top of the wrist-bone, and inward with the heel of the hand.

The next step is to try the exercise with a drumstick in your hand. Hold the stick loosely at a point that allows it to move freely in the fulcrum of your fingers. Begin the wave-like flow from the martial arts exercise above. Again, lead with your wrist.

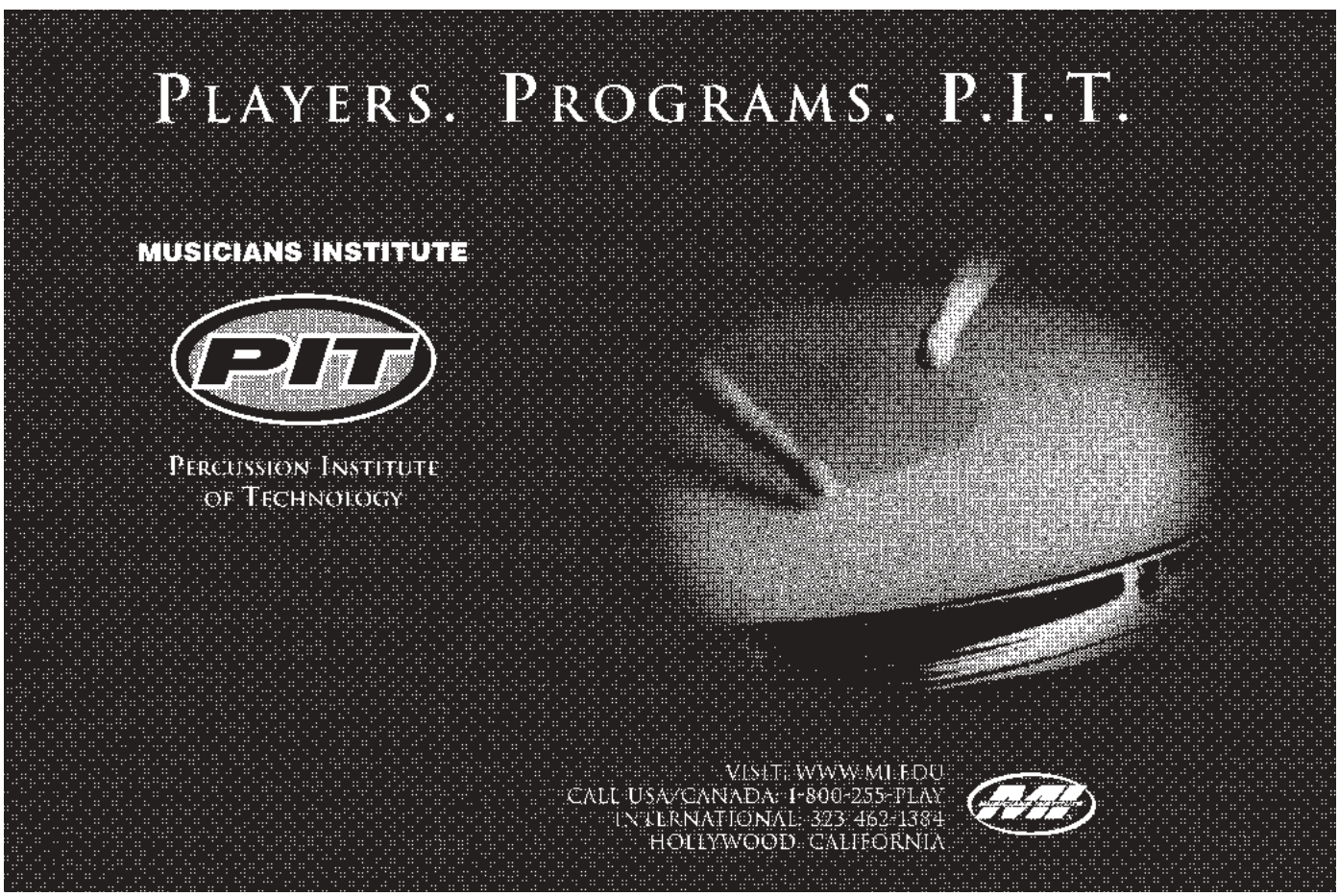
If you play traditional grip, as I do, the motion of the left hand remains virtually the same as the right. Just add a little more torque to the wrist as you move downward. Lead with the outer edge of your hand on the down-stroke, as opposed to leading with the palm heel. You'll find that if you don't really think about it, and just lead with the wrist, the stick finds its own natural and correct path.

Finally, move to a drum pad or snare drum. Try the flow exercise again, letting the stick strike the head and then rebound (photos 3, 4, and 5). Keep your elbows comfortably at your sides and your shoulders relaxed. Lead with the wrist and let the stick do the work. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try some rudiments. Don't *think* about the wave motion, but *feel* it (photo 6).

Flow For Your Feet

One of the interesting things about human anatomy is the fact that our right side mirrors our left, and that our upper half closely approximates our lower half. Therefore, we can create a relaxed, wave-like flow with the feet similar to the one we created for the hands.

From a centered and balanced seat on your drum throne, place the ball of your foot on, or just slightly ahead of, the balance point on your pedal's footboard. Relax your knee, calf, and ankle. Raise your heel, leading with your ankle. Next, drive your ankle and heel downward and "roll" the force of this motion into the ball of your foot, causing the beater to strike the drumhead. Don't bury the beater. Let it rebound to set up the next wave in the cycle.



Martial Arts

Try playing single strokes on your bass drum, and feel the flow. Breathe and relax as you play. Try to move without tension in your knee or leg. Experiment with double strokes and triplets. Try playing your hi-hat in the same manner. If you play with a double pedal or double bass, try alternating your feet as well as playing simultaneously.

If you play with your heel down, you can still create the wave-like motion by keeping your leg relaxed and "rolling" energy from your heel to the ball of your foot. Again, let the beater rebound to set up the next wave. Use visualization and feel the flow. Visualization is key to achieving a truly relaxed wave motion and free-flowing technique.

Flow Like Water

In the martial arts we strive to balance mind and body. We can do the same in drumming. I can't stress enough how important it is to use your mind to visualize and "feel" a technique or movement. In keeping with this idea, let's look at the wave analogy one more time.

6

I've used the wave story with my martial arts students on many occasions when trying to illustrate the basic power principles. Water is a great metaphor for describing a type of power that is relaxed and flowing, yet extremely forceful. Water flows and adapts to its surroundings, filling in empty space with incredible efficiency. Its allies are mass, gravity, and its own ability to roll and swirl. It can appear so gentle, peaceful, and relaxed, yet it can marshal forces so great that it can be destructive and even deadly.

As drummers, we can apply the basic power principles of the martial arts in order to be like water—in all but the destructive sense. We can use torque, mass, and gravity as our allies. We can move with a flow that is peaceful and gentle when the music is calm or light, and powerful or forceful when it's time for the band to really "punch it out." We can roll, crash, and drive forward with significant impact on our audience…just like a wave.

Next month we'll continue our discussion of power. We'll also take a look at the martial arts concept of economy of motion and how it can help improve the speed and efficiency of your drumming.

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Building Your Own Drumset

Part 4: Drilling And Assembly

Story by Paul Bielewicz
Photos by Melissa Talma

So, we've planned our kit, obtained our parts, and begun construction to the point that all shells have been wrapped. Now it's time to drill the holes that will be necessary for the installation of tension casings, tom mounts, the snare strainer, etc. After that, we can assemble the kit into its finished form.

Laying Out The Holes

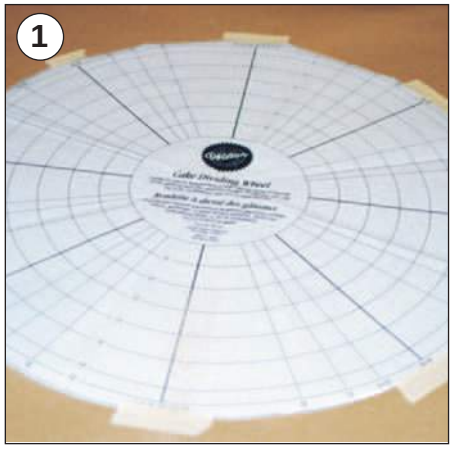
Before the holes can be drilled, they have to be carefully laid out. After all, once you put a hole in a shell, it's there for good. And if it's incorrectly placed, the component that will attach via that hole won't work properly. Each hole has to be laid out according to two different dimensions. The first is its position around the circumference of the drum. The second is its position relative to the top and bottom edges of the drum.

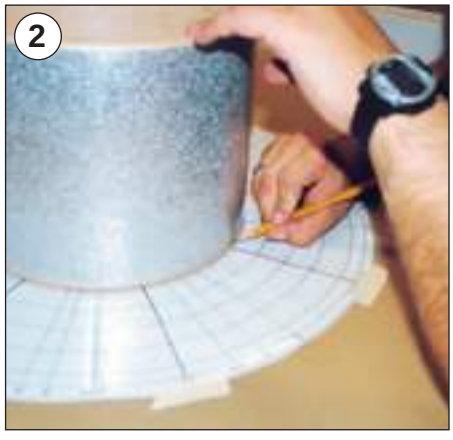
The position around the drum should be determined first. There are different methods that can be used to accomplish this. Each involves some math, as well as the creation of a template of some kind. (See diagram 1.)

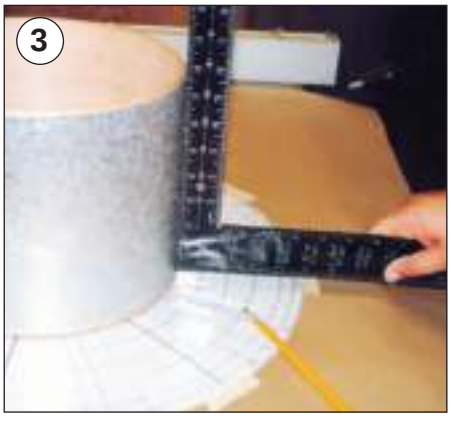
Let's start with the 10" tom, which requires holes for six lugs. A drumshell is measured in terms of a 360° circle. When we divide 360 by 6 (for six lugs), we find that each lug should be 60° from the next one. This can be easily visualized by looking down into the shell, imagining the exact center of the drum as the point of origin. A protractor can be used to lay this out. But an easier tool to use—which I found in an unusual spot—is a pre-made template.

A Sweet Solution

Some of the problems that drum manufacturers face when dividing a circle into parts are also faced by cake decorators. When a cake is decorated to include garlands or pillars, it is important visually and structurally that these be placed evenly around the circumference. Therefore, procuring the perfect template for laying out lugs on a drum involved nothing more than a trip to the local bakery supply shop. The template only cost me $1.50, but it saved me much more in terms of my time (and my sanity).







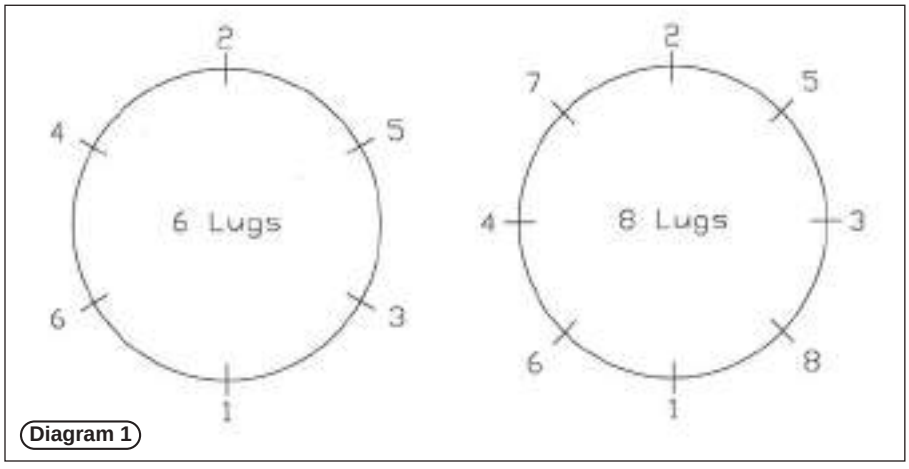
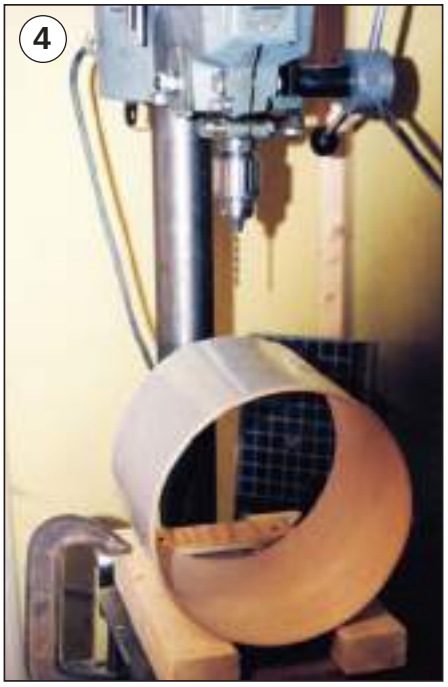
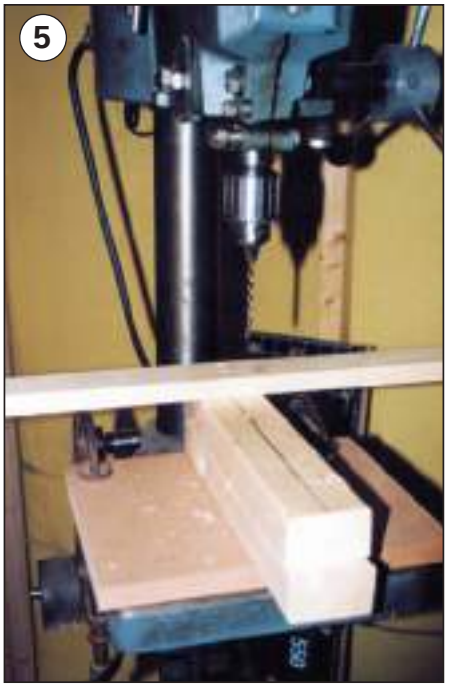


Diagram 1





A cake-decorating template is circular, about 20" in diameter, and printed on thin white plastic. It consists of a series of concentric circles divided in terms of degrees by a series of evenly spaced radiuses. (See photo 1.) For each size of circle, divisions of three to sixteen points are available, which more than covers any possible lug configuration. The largest circle on the template is 19", however, so it won't work for a 20" or 22" bass drum. But it would not be difficult to place the template on a larger sheet of paper or plastic and extend it yourself with a compass and ruler.

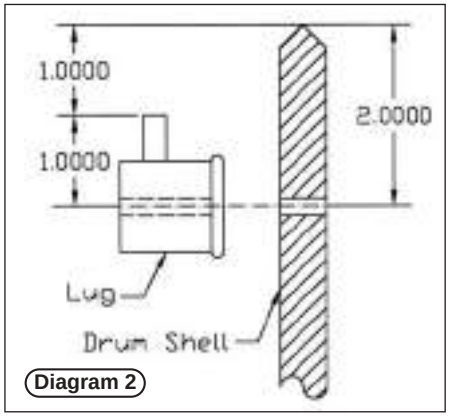


Diagram 2

Once I had the template, laying out six lugs on a 10" tom was no more complicated than placing the drum on the circle labeled 10" and marking the six spots where the extension lines lined up. This was done by making thin pencil tick marks along the exposed wood on the bearing edge of the drum. To ensure that the top lugs would be in line with the bottom lugs, I used a right-angle carpenter's square. Placing the square flat on the surface of the table, and lining up the tick mark already marked, it was possible to make a tick mark along the top bearing edge of the drum exactly in line with the one on the bottom. (See photos 2 and 3.)

Hint: If two of the lugs (one top and one bottom) are placed along the seam of the wrap, it not only helps hold the wrap on in case the seam becomes unglued, but also slightly conceals the seam. This is a good place to make the first mark. Then you can line the rest of the marks up to that one.

There's Always One

To lay out the holes on a snare drum, you don't follow exactly the same procedures as you do for toms. Remember, unlike toms, the snare-drum shell contains two snare beds, which are sections of the lower bearing edge that have been filed down. These are usually not too difficult to find, but if they are, set the drum, bottom-side down, on a flat surface such as a table. Using a flashlight, shine light along the inside of the drum towards the bottom. Light will only protrude from the area of the drum where the beds are. (At least, it *should* only protrude there, if the edges are true.) This will also allow you to find the exact center of the bed and mark it.

Why is this important? The snare strainer and butt plate need to be positioned directly in the center of the bed in order to ensure the best snare response. Additionally, for the strainer to operate properly, it should be directly centered between two lugs. So, knowing where the center of the snare bed is directly affects how the lugs should be laid out on the snare drum.

Oops!

When wrapping the snare shell, I started the wrap in an arbitrary spot, as I did with the other shells. I didn't really think about

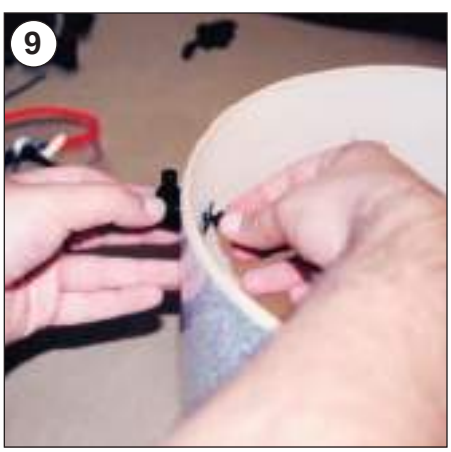
the snare bed and the relation of the lugs to it, nor that I would've liked to conceal the seam beneath a lug. When I employed the method described above to lay out the lugs, unfortunately the seam of the wrap wound up almost directly between two of them. Obviously, it was too late to remove the wrap, so there was really nothing I could do. If I had it to do over again, though, I would've thought about this *before* gluing on the wrap.

Back To The Layout

Once the tick marks are made around the drum, it's necessary to determine the distance that each lug will sit from the top or bottom of the drum. While all lugs are shaped differently, many have an insert into which the tension rod can be screwed. If the lugs are placed too close to the center of the drum, they'll look strange and require long tension rods. If the lugs are placed too close to the edges of the drum, they won't be strong and will fail to disperse the tension evenly across the shell. Besides that, the inserts will be too close to the rims, making it difficult (if not impossible) to tension the drum properly.

The distance from the top of the shell to the hole (or holes—most lugs have two) for each lug is dictated by the distance that the tension-rod insert protrudes from the lug. The easiest way to determine where the lug holes should be drilled is to determine the distance from the insert to the edge of the drum, and add to this the distance from the tip of the insert to the center of the hole. This *sounds* complicated, but there's really not much to it.

I wasn't sure what the ideal distance from the edge of the shell to the tip of the insert was. Visually, I estimated it to be about 1". I then took apart an existing drum that I wasn't using, and sure enough, on this drum the distance was 1". I figured this was a good way to go. The lugs I'd chosen (supplied by Adonis) only have one screw each. The distance from the center of this hole to the tip of the insert was also exactly 1". This made my job easy: Each lug hole had to be exactly 2" from the edge of the drumshell. (See diagram 2.) This applied to the 10" tom and the 14" tom. For the bass drum, because of its depth, I wanted to move the lugs a little closer to the center to add strength. I decided that these would be 3" from the edge. For the snare, because



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double-sided lugs were being used, they needed to be centered. Since the shell was 6" deep, the distance was automatically 3" from the edge.

Lug Holes

I used a drill press to drill the lug holes, because I figured that it would be the best way to ensure that the holes were perfectly plumb. For those without access to a drill press, a hand drill can be used. In that case it is extremely important to make sure you're drilling at a 90° angle to the surface of the drum, and at a constant pressure.

Once again, because I had the least amount of money invested in it, I decided to start with the 10" drum in case I made any irreparable mistakes. I encountered a problem immediately, when I discovered that the drum did not fit over the 11" work-holding plate of the drill press. Using a few 2x4 scraps and two clamps, I devised a simple jig to position the drum properly on top of the plate instead of surrounding it as I'd intended. (See photo 4.) This jig accomplished two purposes. Not only did it make it easy to position the drum, but putting in a 2" spacer also allowed me to measure the 2" distance and repeat it exactly for every hole. Because the distance from the drilling surface to the holding plate was 10", the drum was still somewhat wobbly, so I had to hold it tightly by hand.

I used an $^{11}/_{64}$" drill bit, as stipulated by the lug specs furnished by Adonis. Once I was sure I had my first hole lined up properly, I began drilling—slowly. I applied pressure gently until I was into the surface of the wrap. I was careful to drill slowly through the wood of the shell so as not to split the wood as the bit protruded from the other side. Once the first hole was drilled, I repeated the process for the other five. Once the six holes for the top lugs were drilled, I turned the drum and drilled the holes for the bottom lugs in the same manner.

Hint: If you're using lugs that require two screws per lug, repeat this process after you've already drilled the other side of the drum, so you won't have to keep re-adjusting your jig.

The other drums were a little easier to

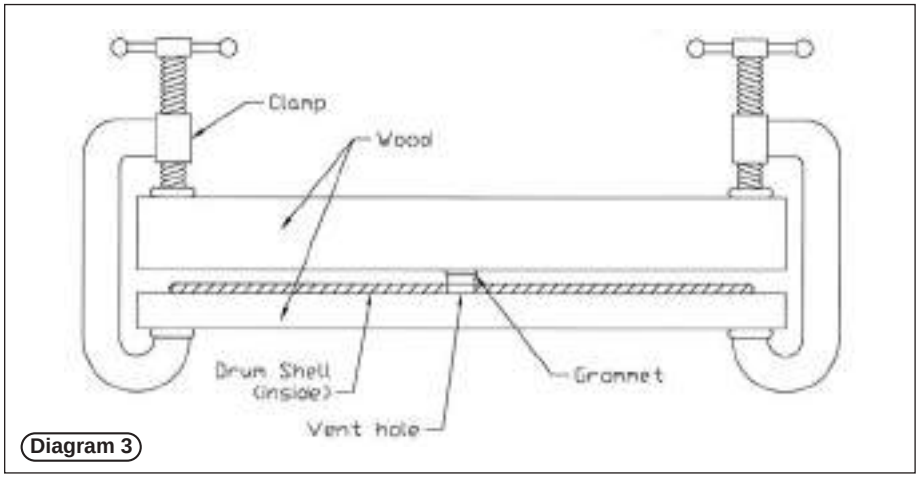

Diagram 3

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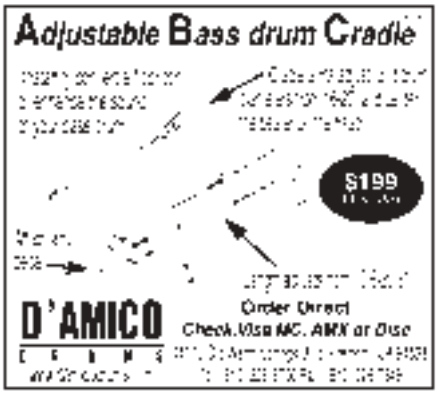
drill. I laid out the spacing using the cake decorating spacer, as I had for the 10" tom. Because the work-holding plate of the drill press was about 11" wide, all three of the other drums fit over the plate, allowing me to reduce the distance from the drill bit to the work-holding surface, and stabilizing the shell being cut. This also allowed me to create another simple jig to hold the shell, and to space out the 2" and 3" distances. (See photos 5 and 6.) I repeated the drilling process until all fifty-two holes were drilled.

Vent Holes

If a drum doesn't have a vent, no air can escape when the drum is hit. As a result, it will likely sound choked and produce less volume and sustain. I believe that only one vent per drum is necessary, so I only needed to drill one additional hole per drum. The standard vent grommet fits into a $\frac{3}{8}$" hole. Functionally speaking, it doesn't matter too much where this vent is located. But it is more visually appealing if the hole is centered between four lugs (two top and two bottom). This point could be determined with a ruler and square, but I found a slightly easier method.

The easiest way to find a center point between four existing points is to draw an "X" connecting them. Because of the curvature of the drum, it would be difficult to do this with a ruler. So instead, I used two pieces of string. I put one end of a string



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through the top right lug hole, and continued to the bottom left lug hole. Then I put one end of a second piece of string in the top left lug hole and the other end in the bottom right hole. This created an X, with the strings crossing at exactly the center of the four lugs. (See photo 7.) You can mark this point lightly with a pencil or with an erasable marker.

In order to fit a grommet into a hole properly, the edges of that hole need to be exactly square (that is, absolutely 90° to the surface of the shell, and very smooth). To accomplish that, it's best to use a Forstner drill bit, which is shaped to produce a perfectly square hole. They come in many sizes, and $\frac{3}{8}$" is fairly standard.

I drilled the vent hole in the 10" tom on the drill press. (See photo 8.) But drilling the holes in the other drums on the drill press posed some problems. So I used a simple electric hand drill instead. Because the hole to be drilled was large, it was possible that the wood on the inside of the shell could be split when the bit protruded from the other side. So I clamped a thin piece of scrap wood to the inside of the drum shell. That way, when the bit emerged from the back side, it wouldn't split the wood of the drumshell. Applying light but steady pressure at as close to a 90° downward angle as possible, I drilled the vent holes on the remaining drums.

Tom-Mount Holes

If you choose to use conventional tom mounts on your kit, you'll need to lay out and drill the holes for the mounts in your toms and bass drum at this point. (I used suspension mounts, which do not require any drilling.) Tom-mounting brackets tend to be centered horizontally between lugs (as with the grommet hole), but at a distance from the top edge of the shell that's the same for all suspended drums. Likewise, bass-drum tom holders are centered horizontally between lug casings, but slightly closer to one side of the drum. These distances vary among drum manufacturers, according to the design of the mounting brackets themselves. I suggest that you do a little research on some existing kits at your local drumshop before you make this determination for your own design.

Spurs And Strainer Holes

Finally, the holes for the bass drum spurs and snare strainer and butt plate need to be drilled. As mentioned earlier, the strainer should be centered exactly between the two

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lugs surrounding the snare bed. This will ensure that it is centered over the bed. The dimension from top to bottom is not as important, but it should allow the lever to be moved freely and provide enough space for the moving parts to travel in. The butt plate should also be centered between the two lugs on the opposite side of the drum (centered over the snare bed). The distance between the bottom edge of the drum and the butt plate should match the distance between the bottom edge of the drum and the point at which the snares attach to the throw-off (with the snares on and tightened).

There is no "set in stone" rule regarding the location of the bass drum spurs. Use the spur itself as a pattern to lay out the holes, and place them in a logical area that will allow the spurs not only to move freely, but to do their job to support the bass drum and keep it from sliding forward when hit. Whatever position you decide on, use the lug holes as reference points and make sure to match the positions of each spur symmetrically on the drum.

Putting It All Together

Once all the holes have been drilled, the assembly process can begin. The best way to start is to fit the vent grommets into their respective holes. The grommets are oversized to create mechanical resistance, in order to fit tightly without any glue or other adhesives. As a result, they're quite difficult to insert into the undersized hole by hand. A lot of pressure is required to get them to seat flat and square. However, it's *not* a good idea to pound them with a hammer or other blunt object, due to the risk of damaging the drum. The method I used was to assemble a simple apparatus using two clamps and some scrap wood shims. Placing a shim on either side of the shell and tightening them gradually with the clamps applied enough pressure to seat the grommet without damaging it or the drumshell. (See diagram 3.)

Once the grommets are in, the lugs can be assembled to the shells. If you are using single-screw lugs, you want to make sure that the insert is straight up and down. (See photo 9.) If you are using lugs with two screws, this will happen automatically (assuming the holes are straight vertically). The Adonis lugs I used are assembled using a hex-head (Allen) screw, so a small Allen wrench was required to hold the screw while a lug wrench was used to tighten the lug nut inside the shell.

If you're using suspension mounts, as I did, the next step would be to assemble and attach the mounts to the existing lugs. If you're using conventional tom mounts, they should now be attached to the shells. Finish up with the bass drum spurs, snare strainer, and snare butt. Once all of the hardware components have been attached, you're ready to put on the heads and tune the drums. (See photo 10.)

Tuning is as much an art as a science, and as with many other things, experience is the best teacher. Based on *your* experience, use the heads of your choice, and tune them the way you like them. Extend the bass drum spurs and place the drum on the floor. Put the snare on a stand. Mount the toms. You have a drumset! (See photo 11.)

Taking The Plunge

If you've followed everything in this series carefully, you should have the basic knowledge necessary to build your own kit. As I stated at the outset, however, I am in no way a professional. Some of the ideas and methods I employed to build my own kit were devised on the spot or only after hasty consideration. On the other hand, the measurement and execution was painstaking. I always used the old adage "Measure twice, cut once." Mistakes can be costly.

Building a drumset is not a simple endeavor. It's costly and time-consuming, and the results may not be perfect. After all, if everyone could build their own drumset, why would commercial drum manufacturers still be in business? But if you're anything like me, you're not going to be completely satisfied with just *any* drumkit. If you know exactly what you want in a kit, and you haven't been able to find it available commercially, building your own kit might be the answer. It doesn't have to be a daunting task. With a little know-how, a few tools, and some start-up cash, almost anyone can be well on their way to a custom drumset.

Blondie Eat To The Beat

Clem Burke (dr), Debbie Harry (vcl) , Chris Stein (gtr), Jimmy Destri (kybd, vcl), Nigel Harrison (bs), Frank Infante (gtr, vcl)

Dreaming • The Hardest Part • Union City Blue • Shayla • Eat To The Beat • Accidents Never Happen
Die Young Stay Pretty • Slow Motion • Atomic • Sound-A-Sleep • Victor • Living In The Real World

Blondie's previous album, *Parallel Lines*, might be considered their creative peak—heck, in many people's eyes it's new wave music's crowning achievement. But *Eat To The Beat* is drummer Clem Burke's masterpiece.

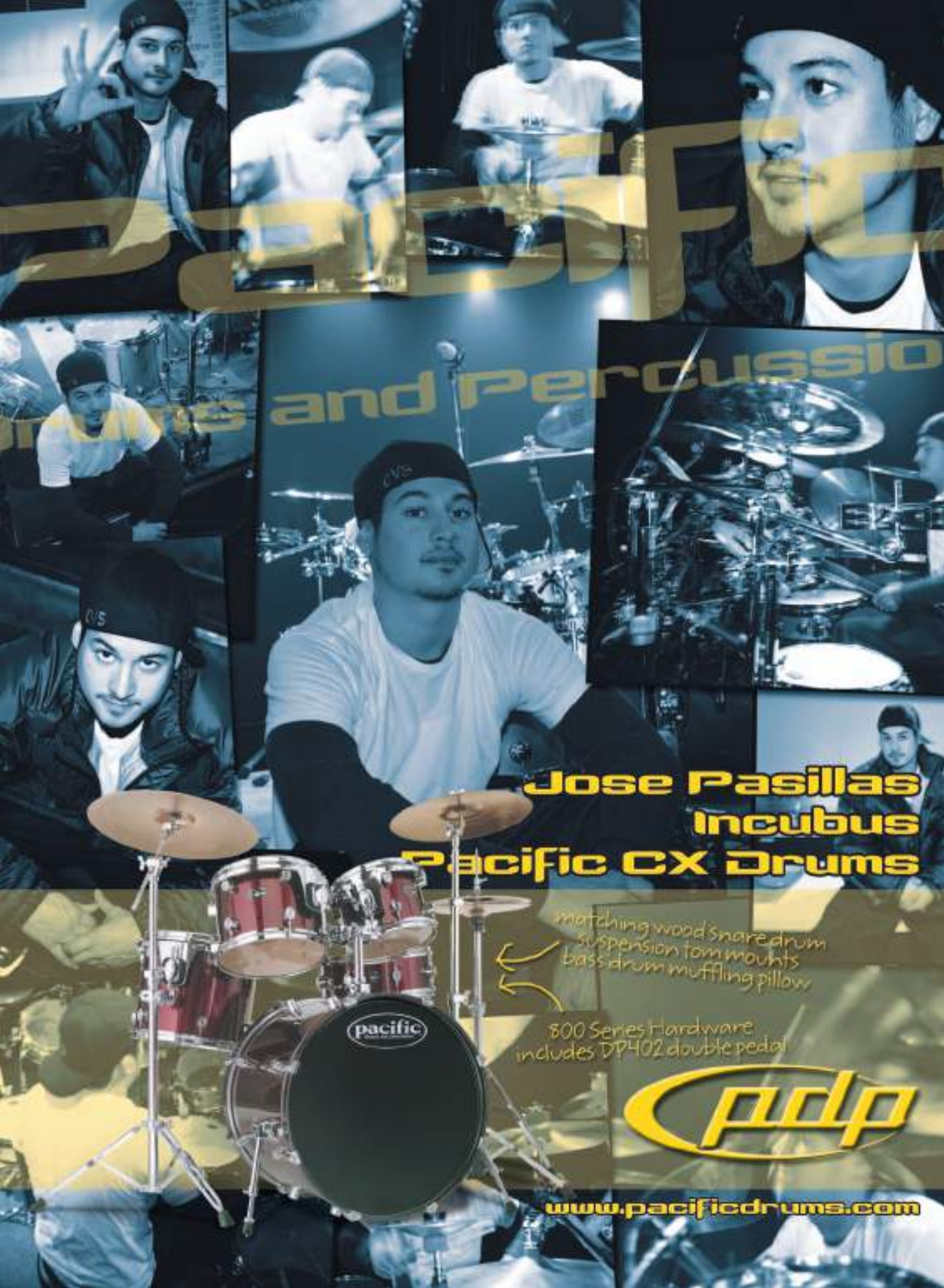
Album opener "Dreaming" was a huge hit, with probably more round-house fills than any charter since The Who's "I Can See For Miles." This should come as no surprise; Burke has always worn his Keith Moon fanaticism proudly on his sleeve. And like Moony, Clem's genius lies in his unstoppable energy, whirlwind dynamics, and innate ability to play the right accents at the right (if unexpected) time.

Clem's wonderful performance on "Dreaming" would be enough to seal his fate as *the* great new wave drummer. Keep listening, though, and you'll hear all sorts of examples of his mastery. Check out his control on "Shayla," surely one of the most beautiful ballads of its era. Despite the delicate melody, Clem still manages to gleefully crash-ride and restlessly change up the beat. How does he do it and make it still sound appropriate? Damned if we know. Side 1 closer "Accidents Never Happen" is uncut adrenaline, with a cool use of a rim-click overdub in the intro, which Clem picks up later on the hi-hats. Brilliant.

Side 2 opens with a completely credible reggae groove on "Die Young Stay Pretty," and Clem shines here too, squeezing in timbale-like snare fills (and overdubbing the real thing). "Slow Motion" is Motown 101, highlighting one of Blondie's (and Clem's) strongest suits: honoring musical history with respect *and* innovation. And anyone who joined the "disco sucks" rallying cry in 1979 obviously never heard "Atomic." Underneath the mirror-ball flash lies one of the strongest four-on-the-floor/upbeat hi-hat stomps committed to vinyl, punctuated by massive fills.

New wave music is often denounced as unshakably tied to its moment in time. But *Eat To The Beat* holds up today due to its classic tunes, artful conception, and bang-up performances. Certainly few drummers—in any style—have sounded so strong.

Adam Budofsky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The Audition

by Ed Wahba

"I can easily outplay anyone here," I thought to myself. "When they hear me play, they'll know that I'm the drummer of choice."

R L R R, L R L L.... There I was, endlessly tapping away my rudiments on the open glove compartment of the car as we made our way down the highway to Canada's Wonderland theme park. On this brisk January morning, I was convinced that this was where I was going to be spending my summer. I had seen the shows the previous year, and I knew that I could easily get through those sets: Madonna...Wham!...Michael Jackson. Who couldn't? Besides, I had just wowed my entire high school with a rendition of Neil Peart's "YYZ" solo from *Exit Stage Left*. I was nineteen, and I was a *drum god*.

Our Arrival

We entered through the back gate as instructed, to find hundreds of people anxiously pacing while waiting for their turn to audition. I arrogantly walked up to the registration table and explained who I was and why I was there. The girl at the table greeted me with a warm smile and politely asked me for my portfolio.

"Portfolio?" I asked. "What portfolio?"

"You know," she said. "A picture or two and a brief history of who you are and what you've done."

"No one told me about a portfolio," I angrily replied. "What should I do?"

"Take this pen and paper and quickly tell us a little bit about yourself and your drumming credentials." Without missing a beat she began to assist the next applicant.

As I looked around the packed auditorium, I noticed that the entertainers around me had some pretty impressive portfolios, with photos, written bios, and cassettes, all neatly put together for the sole purpose of promoting themselves. "This is a load of bull," I thought to myself. "When they hear me play, they'll know that I'm the drummer of choice. This piece of paper is meaningless. I can easily outplay anyone here. I have no doubt about that." So there I sat with pen, paper, and bad attitude, recounting my brief and unimpressive drum history.

The Wait

They called ten of us by name and then took us into a waiting room. We were told that we were the first group of drummers for today's audition and that it wouldn't be long. As I looked around the room, I noticed that people had brought their own snares, drum thrones, and even bass drum pedals and hi-hats. "What a bunch of clowns," I thought to myself. "If they can't sit down on any drumset and make it sound good, they shouldn't be here." There I sat, waiting, waiting, waiting....

Finally, the wait was over. To my surprise, I was the first drummer called to audition. "Excellent" I thought. "Nothing like making a triumphant first impression and setting the precedent for the whole day. This is going to be a piece of cake." As I walked into the room, I quickly made note of my surroundings and the people I'd be working with. There was a five-piece kit with a crash cymbal, a ride cymbal, and hi-hat. I was invited to sit down.

A Rude Awakening

From the moment I sat on that drum throne until this day, that audition has remained the most humiliating—yet most educational—fifteen minutes of my life.

"Play some rock for us," they requested. So I played some rock. "Play some swing," they continued. So I played some swing. "Can you play some Latin?" they asked.

"Latin?" I replied in bewilderment. "No, I don't know any Latin."

"Okay, how about some funk?"

"Hmmm, funk." I'd heard some other drummers in the waiting room talking about funk. "Sorry, I don't seem to know any funk either." The rhythmic tennis match seemed to go back and forth:

"Do you know how to play this?"

"No, I'm sorry, I don't. When do I get to play a solo?"

"We don't need you to play a solo. But we would like you to accompany our piano player on this chart."

"A chart?" I trembled. "No one said anything about sight-reading."

"Oh, it's an easy piece," they claimed. "Just check it out."

Check it out I did. It was all ad lib, with a few open spots for fills. "One, two, three, four" the piano player counted—and that was the end of my audition.

"Thanks for taking the time to apply at Canada's Wonderland," I was told. "Have a safe drive home." With that, I was given a generic informational card thanking me for my time, giving the scheduled hours for the park and its shows, and listing the dates and times for next year's auditions.

Exit Stage Left

My ego had been bruised, my day trip was ruined, and my temper was boiling over. I accused those present of misinforming people about the audition and not pro-

viding enough information about the expectations of the musical directors. I said that they were unprofessional and didn't deserve to have people like us come out and waste valuable time. I found it unacceptable that people should drive all the way to the middle of nowhere, only to be embarrassed in front of other participants and then receive a generic information card.

Needless to say, my tirade didn't last long. I was escorted out of the building with my driver at my side.

From Drum God To Humbled Student

That audition took place in 1986. Believe me, it opened up my eyes, ears, and heart to a whole new world of inspiration and a thirst for drumming knowledge. On the drive home (a very quiet couple of hours) I promised myself that I would abandon the thought of being a "drum deity." Instead, I'd focus on learning more about the rhythms I been asked to perform—and on being professional at all times.

I immediately subscribed to *Modern Drummer*, which has offered valuable information from cover to cover, month after month, year after year. I couldn't care less who makes it on the cover; I can only dream of being on it myself in this lifetime. I offer my thanks to the fine contributors who share their knowledge and experiences on a regular basis. Without them, the art of drumming would still be a mystery to me.

I have been to every drum clinic that has passed through my city. On every occasion I leave the auditorium knowing that I will never be *that* good, yet inspired to be *better*. Once each year I travel to a different place, sit down with local musicians, and ask them to teach me the rhythms that make up their music. It's amazing how many musicians in this world realize that there is no communication barrier when you show an interest. The language of music can be friendly and universal.

My music collection now contains cassettes and CDs from Egypt, Korea, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba. I haven't a clue what they're singing about, but I sure do enjoy playing along. Am I a Latin expert? Nope. How is my funk? Okay. But everything is progressing. To this day, my journey continues.

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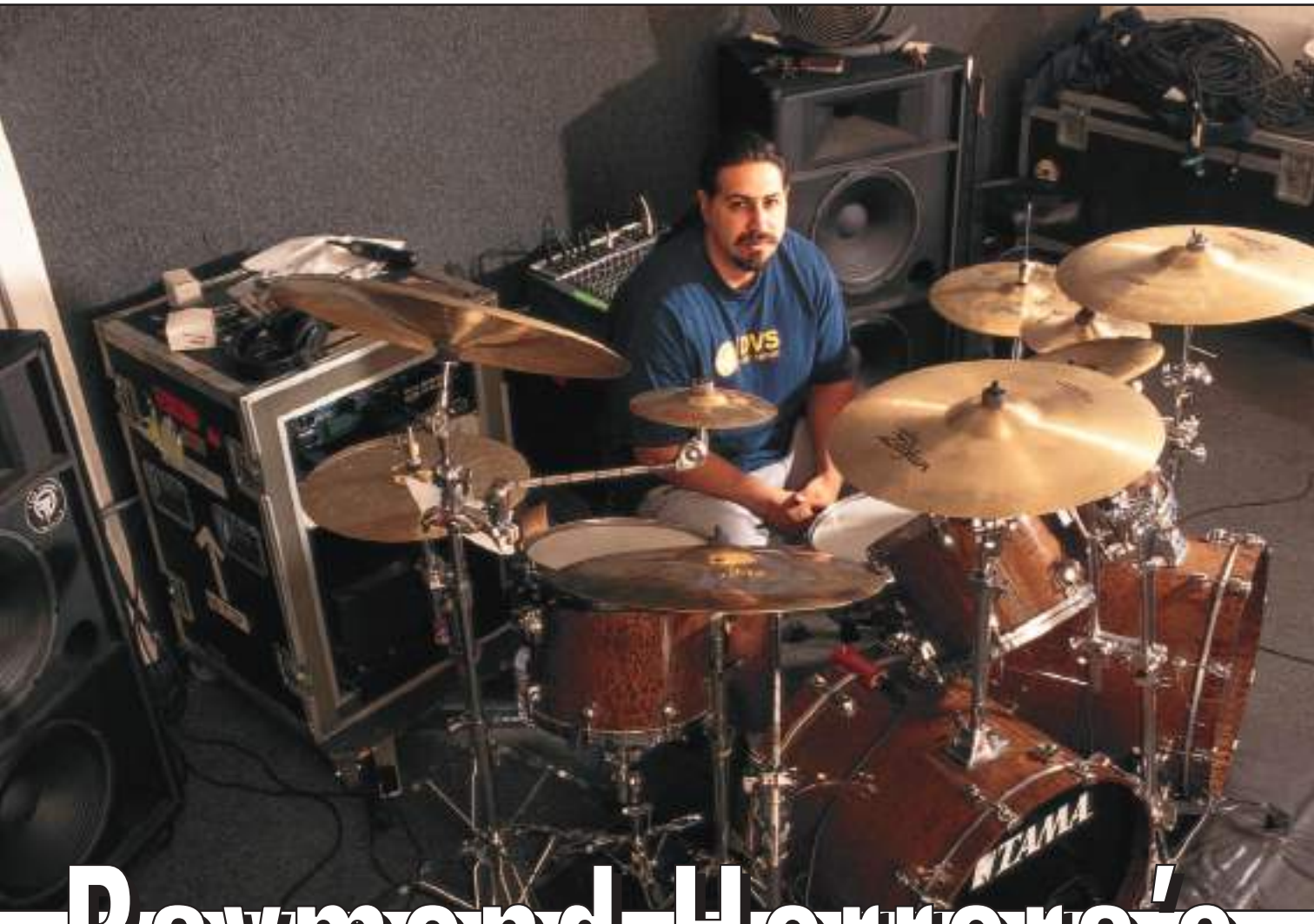


Raymond Herrera's Kush-y Pad

Story by Will Romano • Photos by Alex Solca

After a decade of alerting us to the dangers of a technological society spiraling out of control, industrial sci-fi metal band Fear Factory unexpectedly experienced a mechanical malfunction when they disbanded in March 2002.

"Fear Factory is no more," declares Raymond Herrera, thirty, the band's former drummer. "There were some falling-outs within the band, which is a shame because all that work we put into the group—I was in the band since I was seventeen—makes it disappointing to see it disappear."

Fear Factory may be lost in space, but Herrera continues to park his equipment at The Downtown Rehearsal, the band's Los Angeles–based musical oasis/practice pad. Though the futuristic metallic grind of Fear Factory will no longer be filling the halls of the fifth floor, the walls will be reverberating to a new vibe: Kush—Herrera's new all-star band featuring Fear Factory bassist Christian Olde Wolbers, Deftones guitarist Stephen Carpenter, and Cypress Hill's B-Real at the mic'.

"The place was Fear Factory's for over six years," says Herrera. "But now it's Kush's turn to take over."

Indeed. Raymond, who spent years getting tangled up in a web of electronic cords

(learning the ins and outs of his Trigger Perfect pads from hours of woodshedding at The Downtown Rehearsal), has opted to express himself more acoustically these days. While he still spends hours perfecting those double bass triplets, Herrera has also learned to slightly change his percussive scope.

"I use a maple Tama Starclassic kit, as I did in Fear Factory," Raymond explains. "But I've gotten rid of the pads and replaced them with three Zildjian splash cymbals." Herrera says he also keeps a small Starclassic kit at his home in Reseda, California. "There are still subtleties to the music that I want to accent and play with a bit. My endorsements are still intact, so Zildjian has sent over a load of cymbals for me to try. There have been as many as a hundred cymbals in here at one point."

Though he admits he's still a technology junkie (he proudly explores rhythmic possibilities with his Akai MPC 2000 sampler workstation and an Alesis DM5 drum module), Herrera claims that Kush's raw edge doesn't call for over-the-top techno percussion. "I only use triggers on my two kicks," he specifies, "and I mike them to get a natural sound."

When Herrera describes The Downtown Rehearsal as non-descript, he isn't kidding. "It's better for me that way," explains Ray, who says he wants to use the studio's second room as a recording studio. "A couple of the guys from Kush were saying that we should put a big-screen in here and fire up the video game console. I'm going, 'No way!' I love video games, but they've ruined me. If we hook up a system here, then I would never get anything done. I come here to play drums and write music. That's all."

That's a similar attitude to the one Herrera took when he was in Fear Factory. And that's not the only connection the drummer retains with his one-time group. After having gone their separate ways, the four former members recently released *Concrete*, the full-length demo that persuaded Roadrunner Records execs to sign the band. And thanks to Ray's persistence, Fear Factory re-joined recently to record "Terminate," a song for the home video game *Terminator: Dawn Of Fate*.

"The band was broken up by then, but we still had to cut the tune," says Herrera. "Given our situation, it's an appropriate swan song."

The Recording Teacher

Using Technology To Enhance The Teaching Process

by Dan Garvin

Today's teachers have an amazing amount of instructional material at their disposal, from books to videos to play-along CDs. But the technology of today has also opened a new avenue for the teacher: home recording.

Students often don't see the "big picture" while they're playing, so recording a student is a very efficient way of getting the point across. In fact, by playing something back, the teacher can evaluate the more subtle aspects of playing, such as feel, tone, and touch. There's no need to try to explain an intangible in words after the fact.

In my experience, a single playback can usually take the place of several minutes of discussion, and easily settles any disputes over timing accuracy or other issues. Some teachers have used home video cameras or hand-held cassette recorders to accomplish this for years. (See Joe Nevolo's column in the May 2002 *MD.*) Setting up a teaching studio for recording is a great way to take your students and your teaching to the next level.

Setting up a teaching studio for recording is a great way to take your students and your teaching to the next level.

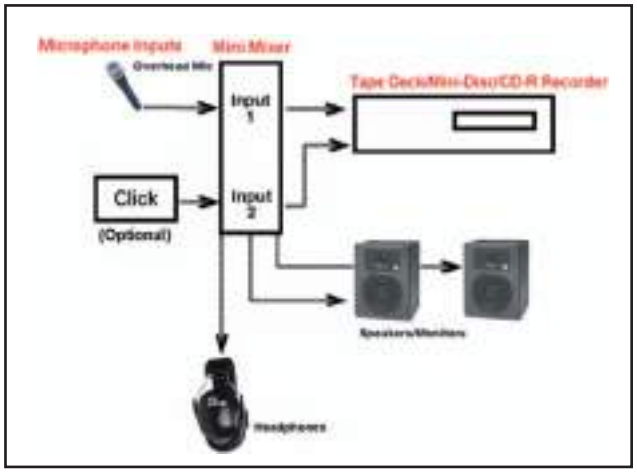
Choosing Gear

Home recording has come a long way since 4-track cassette machines (although such machines still offer a valid and inexpensive option for the recording teacher). However, digital recording has now come within reach of many musicians, in the form of ADAT, Mini-Disc, computer-based systems such as Pro Tools, and stand-alone hard-disk recorders such as Roland's VS series. Secondhand gear is also a very cost-effective way of equipping a home studio. With a small investment, a teacher can transform his or her teaching studio into a recording/teaching studio.

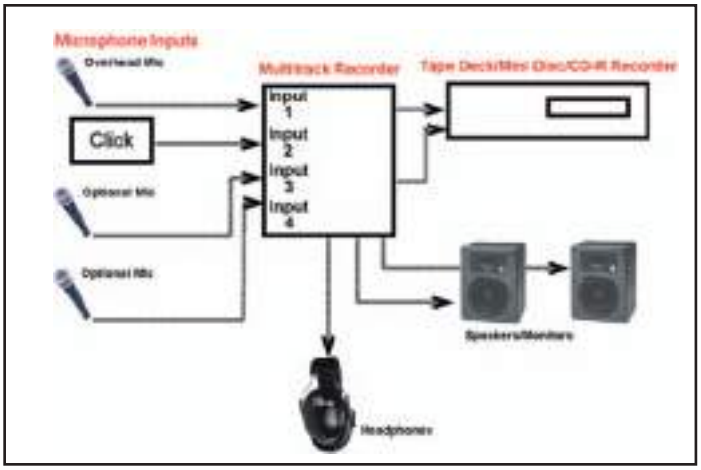
A home studio is built around an analog (tape) or digital recorder of some kind. Analog recorders can have a somewhat lower sound quality than that of digital equipment (although some audiophiles often make up for this with ease of use and an onboard mixing console (and a smaller price tag). Next, a few microphones, stands, and cables are needed. At minimum, a single overhead microphone can be used, and it doesn't have to be an expensive one. Additional microphones will give you more control over the recording, and can improve the recording quality.

A drum machine or metronome is also very useful, since it can be run into the recorder to provide a click track. A pair of studio monitors or speakers lets you listen to the recordings during the lesson, while the student will need a pair of headphones to hear the click or backing track.

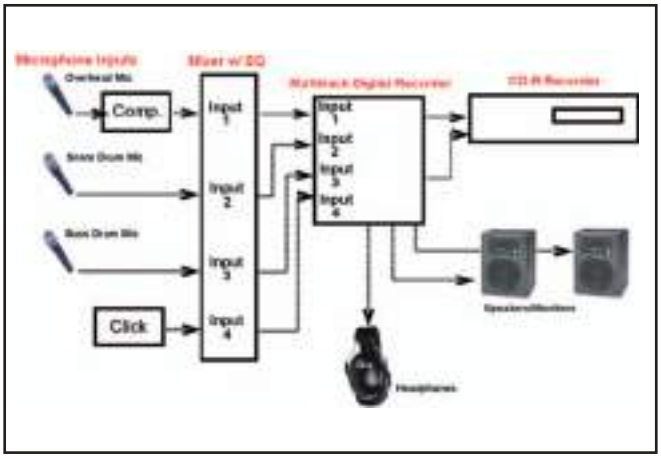
A CD burner or cassette deck will let the student take the lesson home with him or her, along with any recordings you feel would be helpful. Compressors, reverbs,



Minimal Studio Setup



Standard Studio Setup



Dan Garvin's Studio Setup

microphone preamps, and other "outboard" gear can be very useful and can really improve the recording quality. But they're not essential.

If your budget is tighter, there are other options: a single microphone, a small mixer, and a cassette deck or mini-disc recorder can take the place of a multi-track recorder. Simply pan the click to one channel and the microphone to the other, and adjust the balance between the two on playback.

Teaching on an electronic kit makes things even easier, since there is no need for microphones or processing. Electronic kits also allow you to record directly into a computer via MIDI—eliminating the need for an outboard mixer or recorder. And if the kit's brain can also provide a click, there's no need for a drum machine or metronome.

Setting Up

In my home studio I use three microphones: A Shure Beta 52 in the bass drum, a Shure SM 58 overhead, and an old second-hand "mystery mic'" on the snare. This setup allows me to isolate the bass and snare drums from the mix, which is particularly useful when dealing with technique issues. I run these mic's into a small, inexpensive mixing console for some basic EQ, and from there into my Roland VS-880. (The VS-880 does have onboard EQ, but it lacks the ease of use of true knobs and faders found on the mixer.)

The overhead mic' runs through a very basic second-hand compressor unit, which helps me keep the recording level more consistent and guards against distortion if the student suddenly "lays into" the drums. From there the signal goes through an Alesis NanoVerb reverb unit. I also run my drum machine into my recorder, which allows me to always have a click track to move in and out of the mix. This has been very useful when dealing with time issues, as well as explaining playing ahead of or behind the beat.

The recorder's outputs are split so that one runs to the studio monitors and the other runs to my CD burner. Being able to put a CD into my students' hands at the end of the lesson has been extremely useful. That way, they can review their playing during the next week and spot specific problem areas we've been talking about in the lessons.

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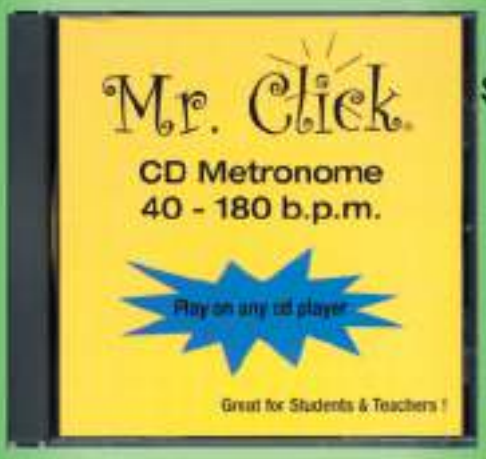

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This setup also allows me to store "Music Minus One"–style songs, which I can have the student play along with and mix together. I have been able to get several "no-drums" mixes of demos I've played on, with a click track added back in to lock in with. I also use Dave Weckl's *Contemporary Drummer Plus One* package and Vic Firth Inc.'s *Artist Series* CD. Suddenly, the student isn't just in a lesson—it's a recording session.

Hard-disc recorders work especially well for this, because they have the added advantages of accessibility and memory. For instance, you can use the locator or index function to mark different spots in the song or exercise, which you can then get to with the push of a button. This lets you compare two different "takes" of the same material, or mark sections in a play-along song such as verse, chorus, bridge, etc. to isolate and repeat them. This is great when the student just can't get that bridge down.

Using The Studio

Most teachers have had students who get the mechanics of a pattern down, but just can't get it to *feel* right. Previously, we might have tried discussing it at length and/or demonstrating it—and we still might not have gotten the point across. With the recording setup, we have a very efficient tool for dealing with the issue.

Record the student playing the pattern for thirty seconds, then play it back and discuss it. Record another thirty seconds immediately after the first, marking the beginning of the second take with a locator or index number. Compare the takes, using the locator button to switch quickly between the two. (The tape counter on an analog machine will also work, but is slower.) Continue recording takes and "locating" them as the student makes adjustments to his or her performance until it's right. Then compare the final, correct groove to the first take, and discuss how the student got from there to here. It's a great "instant-feedback" way to show progress and to motivate.

And There's More

In addition to what we have discussed above, there are many other uses for a recording/teaching studio. Here's a quick list.

1. Use the level meters to show inconsistencies in volume.

2. Send the student home with recorded examples of difficult patterns, recorded by you as you demonstrate during the lesson.

3. Send the student home with the "no-drums" mix of a play-along song, with instructions to come up with his or her own parts. (I prefer not to let my students hear the original with the drums, in order to encourage their own creativity.) You can then act as a producer, helping to fine-tune parts and suggesting ideas to help the song come alive—creating the same give-and-take relationship with a producer that drummers often experience in the studio. This is also a great way to show how several different drum parts can often work for the same section of music.

4. Copy recorded examples of source or inspirational material to guide the student's listening. Or copy material to be transcribed in between lessons.

5. Record your student's version of a transcribed drum solo (such as those found in *Modern Drummer*) and compare it to the original version. This is a great way to work on style and interpretation.

6. Record and critique pieces to be played in solo competitions (such as solo

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snare drum or mallet pieces).

7. Record the second part in a duet for the student to practice with at home.

8. If you have a second drumkit in your teaching studio, mike it as well. Record traded solos and fill ideas, panning yourself to one side of the mix and the student to the other.

9. Use Pro Tools and other computer-based recorders to visually display the tracks. This allows you to show where the time is deviating from the click. You can even correct it digitally, so the student can hear it "played right."

10. Since regular metronomes are difficult to hear when practicing drumset, use a drum machine to create a click-track tape or CD to be used with headphones. Start at a slow tempo, recording each tempo for five minutes at 5-bpm increments. A CD will usually hold clicks from 60 bpm to 120 bpm.

11. Program difficult patterns into a drum machine, and then record several minutes onto a cassette or CD for the student to practice along with at home.

12. If you are a multi-instrumentalist, record the two of you playing together. Use the faders to create a mix of the drumset to demonstrate the correct balance between the bass, snare, and cymbals.

13. Try using different snare drums or cymbals from week to week, so students can learn about the tonal differences between them.

14. Digital recorders make it very easy to create loops from other recordings. There are also several affordable computer programs for making loops, which can then be transferred to your recorder. This allows you to make tapes or CDs of loops for students to practice and be creative with.

Only The Beginning

I've just scratched the surface of the uses for a recording/teaching studio. As new issues come up with students (as they often do), I keep finding new ways of using the technology at my fingertips. My students are advancing quicker and playing with more maturity than they ever have before. Younger students are enthralled with hearing themselves for the first time, and my more advanced students enjoy the deeper, subtler issues we can now get into.

Using a small recording setup for teaching can be a great advantage for any teacher. From a business standpoint, my recording setup makes me more competitive with other teachers who don't have one. But the greatest reward is how the setup can enrich virtually any student's learning experience.

Dan Garvin began playing and teaching professionally in the Baltimore/Washington area in 1992, while studying jazz and classical percussion at Towson State University. Dan was a founding member of SR-71, and was with the band from 1996 to 2001, culminating in the gold-selling release Now You See Inside *on RCA Records. In 2001 he toured and recorded with Ninedays, also supporting a gold-selling major-label debut. His attention then turned to session work and a return to teaching. Dan uses Vic Firth sticks, Sabian cymbals, and Pearl drums.*

This article first appeared in the Vic Firth Education Newsletter. Special thanks to Mike Hoff at Vic Firth for assistance with the graphics.

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The Rogers Dyna-Sonic Snare Drum Revisited

by Harry Cangany

Every time I hear the name of this month's snare drum, I think of dear, sainted Ben Strauss, the late sales manager of Rogers Drums. Until his passing in 1998, Ben and I would talk regularly. He was constantly amazed at the ever-increasing interest in Rogers drums among drum collectors.

Here's some background to help explain that interest. Prior to 1952, Rogers had been a New Jersey–based manufacturer of quality drumheads. They also sold some drums—primarily assembling them using parts made by other manufacturers. In 1952, in stepped Henry Grossman, owner of Cleveland's Grossman Music. Henry bought Rogers, moved it to Covington, Ohio, and began the task of making it a world-class competitor to Slingerland, WFL, Gretsch, and Leedy & Ludwig.

In the fourteen years that Grossman owned the company, Rogers did, indeed, become a serious contender. The brain trust of Henry Grossman, Ben Strauss, designer Joe Thompson, and dealer Ellis Tolin combined to offer the drum world Swiv-O-Matic hardware, distinctive hoops, unique and colorful finishes, and a one-of-a-kind snare drum.

Sporting a hardly-there snare bed, and fitted with a special frame that always held the snares rigid, the drum was built for a champion. That's where Ellis Tolin came in. Ellis knew Buddy Rich. Buddy had become a Rogers endorser in 1960, and he wanted the most responsive snare drum imaginable, complete with Diplomat drumheads. The result of Buddy's desire was a ten-lug, all-maple snare called the Dyna-Sonic.

The name was born during a train ride between Covington and Cleveland. It was a time when space-age terms like "supersonic" and "turbo thrust" were being used prevalently in advertising. (By the way, Buddy continued as a Rogers endorser until April of 1966, when Grossman sold the company to CBS.)

When new in the mid-1960s, maple Dyna-Sonics sold for $150. Forty years later, people are paying thousands of dollars for them. Why are they so popular? First, there are very few of them. Although no one knows exactly how many were made, we do know it wasn't a large number. Following the Beatle boom in 1964, the interest in four-piece Ludwig drumkits was so great that *every* drum

Removing Tension-Rod Rust

by Ned Ingberman

At Vintage Drum Center we do a lot of restoration work. So we see our share of rusty tension rods. If you have a similar problem, you can quickly and effectively remove this rust using grade "0000" super-fine steel wool, a drum accessory bit key, and a power drill.

First, mount the drum accessory bit key into your power drill, then set the drill on "reverse" mode. (A ready-made bit key is available from Evans. A homemade version can be created by cutting off the stem section of a drumkey at the point where the stem connects to the wing section.)

Nestle the shaft of the rusty tension rod into a thick wad of the steel wool. Squeeze the wool tightly in your hand. Then place the key on the head of the tension rod and press the trigger. The tension rod will start to "unscrew" from the steel wool. When it is almost out of the wool completely, release the trigger and switch the drill's direction mode to "forward". Then "drill" the rod back into the wool. Repeat the forward and reverse steps until all of the rust is gone.

If you prefer not to hold the steel wool in your hand (or for better results on especially heavy rust), use a vise instead. When using the vise, sandwich the steel wool between two thin strips of wood or dense cardboard. This will act as a protective bushing to prevent possible stripping of the tension rod threads due to contact with the jaws of the vise. Use plenty of steel wool; it compresses when the vise is tightened.

Each time you "drill" the rod in and out, tighten the vise slightly to compensate for the loss of friction caused by the wearing down of the steel wool. The vise should always be tight enough so that the drilling resistance or "feel" of the tension rod is similar to that of a wood screw going into soft wood.

If this method doesn't get rid of the rust, remove the steel wool (and protective strips of wood or cardboard). In its place, insert two strips of masonite and follow the same procedure as you did in using the steel wool. The direct contact of the tension rod against the masonite will in some cases do the job when steel wool won't.

If *that* method fails, you might consider using a motor-driven wire wheel. This will strip off the chrome or nickel plating on the tension rod, and is recommended only in cases where the plating has deteriorated to such a degree that its removal would actually improve the appearance of the tension rod.

As the owner of Vintage Drum Center (www.vintagedrum.com), Ned Ingberman has extensive experience in the repair and restoration of vintage drum equipment.

company started building similar kits. To speed up manufacturing, Ludwig fitted their kits with metal snare drums (despite the fact that Ringo used a wood drum). Slingerland, Gretsch, Camco, Premier—and Rogers—focused on metal-shell snares to keep up with Ludwig. Hence the scarcity of wood Dyna-Sonics.

The wood Dyna-Sonics are also popular because of who played them. Buddy Rich, Roy Burns, and Louie Bellson all were wood-shell players. That's a pretty influential trio. Most other endorsers played metal Dyna-Sonics or the next model down, the Powertone.

This month's featured drum is a 5x14 in silver sparkle with a large glitter pattern. It probably dates from the Dayton, Ohio period of Rogers' operation. The interior has a clear coat, and the drum just *sings*. There's no telling where Dyna-Sonic values are ultimately headed, but this little Buckeye beauty is valued at $4,000!

Gary Chester

New Breed Guru

by Hal B. Selzer

"Stand By Me," "Under The Boardwalk," "Brown Eyed Girl," "Twist & Shout," "Sugar, Sugar," "Bad, Bad, Leroy Brown," "It's My Party," "Spanish Harlem," "The Boxer," and "Do You Know The Way To San Jose?" These are just a few of the hundreds of hit songs that contain the drumming of Gary Chester. Artists ranging from Jackie Wilson, Quincy Jones, and Aretha Franklin to Jim Croce, Simon & Garfunkel, and the Lovin' Spoonful all utilized his talents.

But Gary's biggest legacy may be the influence he had on drummers of the next generation, from rock stalwarts such as Kenny Aronoff, Max Weinberg, and Tico Torres to progressive pioneers such as Dave Weckl and Danny Gottlieb. To them and dozens more, he was the quintessential drum teacher.

Gary's unique theory of time and four-way coordination brought a new challenge to drummers who had mastered their drum vocabulary and were looking to get to the next level. Even today, fourteen years after Gary's death, drummers periodically check on themselves by pulling out his classic book, *The New Breed*. "Every couple of months I refer back to it, just to keep up," says Joe Bellia, who has drummed for Dave Mason and Southside Johnny & The Jukes.

Gary Chester in his natural habitat — the studio (circa 1980).

Ya Gotta Have A System

During Gary's many years as the top session drummer in New York, he accumulated a vast collection of what he called "systems," which were the different styles and unique drum parts that producers asked for. He would write them out, file them, and go back to them periodically when a situation called for them. This collection became the basis for his methods, which he named *The New Breed*, thinking it would open up the world for a "new breed" of drummer.

Gary's students all have one common memory of working with him. Besides teaching the technical aspects of drumming, he was a mentor to his pupils. He believed that creativity was just as important as technical ability. "Near our house there was a circle of boulders," recalls Jan Chester, Gary's wife of thirty years. "Gary would sit on a big rock in the middle and have seminars out there. He would talk about philosophy. His relationship was not just teacher to student. They used to call him 'The Guru.'"

Top studio and touring drummer Kenny Aronoff also remembers Gary that way. "I studied with Gary for about a year, and found him to be an unbelievable person. He taught me some very cool drum stuff, but we also talked a lot about life and personal stuff that was just as important as the drum instruction. I loved that about him."

Kenny feels some of Gary's wisdom actually became useful years after he studied with him. "I learned a lot from him with regard to keeping time with a click track, and keeping time between all my limbs," Kenny says. "Gary also addressed fills. I still remember him saying to just know four fills really well, as opposed to

"Gary listened to my playing on some Pat Metheny records. The first thing he said was, 'We have a lot of work to do!'" —Danny Gottlieb

Gary as a young man, with his early 1960s Ludwig kit

knowing twenty fills not so well. It sort of made sense then, but now it totally makes sense."

Dave Weckl credits Gary with helping him get to the next level. "Gary's instruction was some of the most profound I have ever had," he says. "My coordinated independence abilities and concentration levels increased immensely because of his teaching techniques, which helped to build a strong foundation for me."

Gary had a reputation for being extremely demanding of his students, with little patience for poor performance or inflated egos. Dave Weckl recalls, "I was twenty-two at the time. I was antsy to get in the business on a professional level, and I felt I had what it would take to do so. So I said to myself, 'Okay, if I can do everything this guy wants me to, I'm going to ask him to help me get into the studios.' After the first lesson, I was humbled into a position of reality. I couldn't do *anything* he wanted me to."

Danny Gottlieb has a similar story. "I heard Dave Weckl playing at 7th Avenue South, in Manhattan, in 1982. He was playing some amazing things on the bass drum without changing the patterns of his other limbs. I asked him how he was able to do that, and he told me he was studying with

Gary Chester and that it was an incredible experience. So I called Gary to set up an evaluation lesson.

"Gary listened to my playing on some Pat Metheny records," Danny continues. "The first thing he said was, 'We have a lot of work to do!' Then he had me play a few of his 'systems.' I played 16th notes on the hi-hat—with both hands together as flams—and read some of his sight-reading pages. Then I played right hand on the hi-hat, which went well. But then he had me play left hand on the hi-hat, which was totally foreign to me. *Then* he asked me to play right hand on the hi-hat, left on the snare on 2 and 4, sight-read the bass drum, and *sing* quarter notes. I was totally helpless. To make matters worse, a thirteen-year-old student came for *his* lesson, played something *much* harder, and sang quarter notes with ease! I drove home totally intimidated and really freaked—but also inspired beyond belief."

Singing drum parts was an integral part of Gary's teaching. "The idea was to have you really get inside each part of the pattern that you were playing," says Danny. "By singing what each limb was to play, you could focus consciously on one part of the pattern, while sight-reading the other rhythms. Training yourself to recognize and play the rhythms while singing another part was great for independence, rhythm recognition, and groove."

Time Factor

Another key aspect to Gary's drumming and teaching persona was time. "I always play on top of or behind the beat," he once said. "I'll play $\frac{1}{32}$ above everything. But first you've got to know where the beat is. I never had to play with a metronome because God gave me something inside. I have an inborn quarter note. But I can groove my butt off on a click by playing around it. I look at it as a great bass player. The trick is, don't let it confine you."

"I remember Gary giving me an incredibly difficult pattern to play at one lesson," says Danny Gottlieb. "To help me out, he played the hi-hat rhythms on an ashtray. After about ten seconds, I got goose bumps, and I realized why Gary's on a thousand hit records. He had *perfect* time. He could play and leave spaces between notes that were just perfect. I don't have that kind of time, and I don't know many drummers who do. If you listen to any record Gary is on, the time is amazing. And the fills he plays never rush or drag, they always groove and are musical within the context."

Studio Master

In spite of his insistence on mastering technique, Gary was committed to using only what was right for the song. "I don't go into a session with the idea of doing it just for the money," he said. "I actually go in to help them create the concept that has already been conceived by the arranger and/or producer."

"Gary was a great rhythm-section team player," affirms Dave Weckl. "He left a lot of things out, and on many of his records the drums drop out completely at times."

Gary's search for the right sounds led to some innovations that are in wide use today, such as attaching a tambourine on top of the hi-hat. He also played an ashtray on several recordings. But once he went

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Gary conducts a drum clinic in the 1970s.

> "I would hear him yelling all kinds of stuff at some students," adds Katrina Chester. "And the next minute I'd hear the student say, 'So, Gary, can I get a double lesson next week?'"

even farther than that. "Laura Nyro wanted a certain sound," recalls Jan Chester. "Gary ordered a big sheet of glass, and they took it in the elevator and recorded the sound of it smashing."

Another famous instance of Gary's creative side was the session for "Under The Boardwalk." "I remember the story he used to tell me about that session," says Gary's daughter Katrina (now lead vocalist for recording artists Luxx). "That cracking noise on the record is the hook of the whole song. Play that part and anyone will say, 'That's from "Under The Boardwalk".' But when Dad thought of it and how to do it, everyone thought he was crazy."

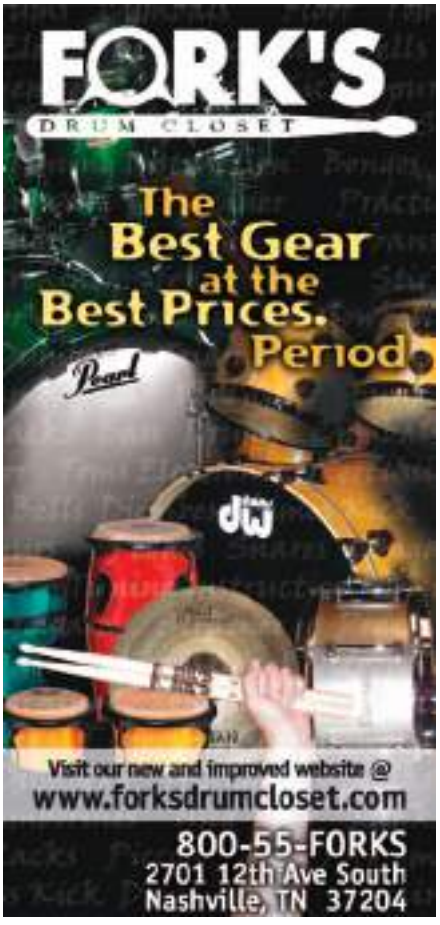
The Quintessential Teacher

The dedication that Gary expected from his students was matched only by his dedication to teaching them. "He would start as early as 8:00 A.M.," recalls Jan, "and go until night. And he had students in Europe and Australia do lessons on tape."

Marty Paglione, president of Applied Microphone Technologies, which makes customized microphones for drums, remembers Gary's insistence on total dedication. "Gary was going on a fishing trip with some of his students. I told him I wanted to take a break also, to be with my family. He told me if I didn't go with him, I had to tape my lesson and mail it to him."

Tough Love

Although Gary was sometimes a tough taskmaster, his former students almost uniformly speak of him with reverence. "Gary's influence most affected me by



Gary Chester

reminding me that we play both from our musical experiences and our life experiences," explains Chrissy Adams, Gary's protégé and collaborator on the second *New Breed* volume. "He stressed that balance is necessary to produce great musicians. Work hard in a disciplined and dedicated manner, but relax and play hard too. It's the combination of every experience that makes the whole musician. Most importantly, Gary led me back to my love of drumming for drumming sake."

"I often discussed personal problems with him," recalls Danny Gottlieb. "He was always willing to listen and give his opinion. I know he helped many of us deal with life, relationships, and the ups and downs of the music business. He also told me stories about his own life, like the time he was on a gig at a club on the water. There was a balcony, and Gary decided to fish from it. He caught a fish and pulled it in, and it landed in the sax section!"

"He was demanding," says Kenny Aronoff, "but in the same way as a strong, loving football coach. He'd kick your ass, but give you praise, too. We got along really great."

"I would hear him yelling all kinds of stuff at some students," adds Katrina Chester. "And the next minute I'd hear the student say, 'So, Gary, can I get a double lesson next week?'"

Gary Chester's influence on drummers and drumming has spread far and wide, to individuals who worked or studied with him, and to many who may not even know his name. When asked about Gary at a recent show, Max Weinberg, stick man for Bruce Springsteen and the Max Weinberg 7 on the *Conan O'Brien Show*, summed it up in one sentence: "I loved that man."

Gary Chester's seminal instruction book, The New Breed, *is available through the Modern Drummer Library and in most drumshops and music stores.*

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Lou Santiago

"I learned to play by watching other drummers in church," says Lou Santiago of Howard Beach, New York. "One day I picked up the sticks, made some noise, and loved every minute of it."

That was eight years ago, and the twenty-five-year-old drummer has continued his love affair with drumming since then. Beginning with Christian

music, Lou branched out into Latin jazz after hearing Cliff Almond play on a Michel Camilo album. That led to funk, bebop, and rock, and to inspiration from drummers like Almond, Steve Gadd, Dave Weckl, Hilary Jones, Vinnie Colaiuta, Horacio Hernandez, David Garibaldi, and Danny Carey.

Lou was a fast learner, too. By 2001 he had developed the skills and technique necessary to win his region in the Guitar Center National Drum-Off. He placed seventh nationally, largely based on the impression he made with his Latin/rock-flavored solo. Lou employs those same skills—and a strong sense of musicality—with Soul Candy, a hard funk/rock band currently breaking on the New York City scene. He is also "house drummer" for sessions at Long Island's Priceless Productions studio. Lou plays on MRP Custom Drums, with Sabian cymbals, DW hardware, Pearl Eliminator pedals, and Vater sticks.

"Drumming isn't just a job or a hobby for me," says Lou. "It's become a ministry. The lord has given me a talent, and I feel I should share it with everyone. Music inspires and speaks to people. I pray that my drumming will do the same."

Kevin Danz

Kevin Danz is the kind of drummer whose playing makes an immediate impression. In his home base of Orlando, Florida, a local radio station described him as "a young guy that sounds like an old cat, with wicked time."

Kevin was born in Chicago in 1973. He plays in an aggressive funk style that's heavily influenced by rock, jazz, R&B, and world music. This amalgam of influences has served him well on performances with Harry Connick Sr., The Jimmy Dorsey Big Band, Joe Williams, Mark Preston, and The Naples Philharmonic Orchestra. Kevin has also recorded with Rob Boyle, John Depaola, Jeff Phillips, Jenee, and Canadian pop star Bruce Guthro.

With a B.A. in music from Eastern Illinois University and an M.A. from the University of Missouri—Columbia, Kevin enjoys sharing his knowledge of music with students of all ages. (He has taught for several years at Johnny Lee Lane's United States Percussion Camp.)

Currently, Kevin plays for different entertainment companies in Orlando. He can be seen in *Tarzan Rocks*, a daily concert for Disney Entertainment that features Grammy award–winning music by Phil Collins. He can also be seen in Disney commercials with Sheila E and Julio Iglesias Jr. Additionally, Kevin is working on a new funk band project called Chapter 5. He plays Yamaha Beech Custom drums, Zildjian cymbals, DW pedals, and Regal Tip sticks.

Ben Bilello

Hartford, Connecticut's Ben Bilello is a rarity these days: a young drummer completely dedicated to jazz. Oh, he played his share of Led Zeppelin covers as a teenager. But after hearing Jeff "Tain" Watts while in high school, Ben knew he wanted to play jazz professionally from that point on.

The music of Jeff Watts led Ben to Max Roach, Kenny Clarke, Art Blakey, and Philly Joe Jones...and ultimately to the Hartt School of Music in West Hartford. There he studied drumset and percussion with Ben Toth, as well as frame drumming with Glen Velez. At Hartt Ben was exposed to the drumming of Roy Haynes, Billy Higgins, James Black, Vernel Fournier, and Lewis Nash. Jazz great Jackie McLean was the founder and director of the jazz department, and students had the opportunity to perform with him. "That alone was worth the tuition," says Ben. He also studied privately with Michael Carvin, and ultimately graduated cum laude in 1999.

Since leaving school, Ben has been making a living as a professional musician and teacher. He's played with jazz luminaries including Mulgrew Miller, Joe Wilder, Steve Davis, Jimmy Greene, and Cuban bassist Charles Flores. He uses Gretsch drums or a Sonor Jungle set, along with a DW/Craviotto snare and Sabian cymbals.

Ben's short-term goals are to record and travel more. As for the long term, he wants to continue studying to learn more about harmony, arranging, orchestration, and composition. "Most of all," he says, "I want to have as much fun playing fifty years from now as I did when I was a kid playing in the basement after school."

If you'd like to appear in *On The Move*, send us an audio or video cassette of your best work (preferably both solo and with a band) on three or four songs, along with a brief bio sketch and a high-quality color or black & white close-up photo. (Polaroids are not acceptable. Photos will not be paid for or credited.) The bio sketch should include your full name and age, along with your playing style(s), influences, current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are (recording artist, session player, local career player, etc.). Include any special items of interest pertaining to what you do and how you do it, and a list of the equipment you use regularly. Send your material to On The Move, Modern Drummer Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Material **cannot** be returned, so please **do not** send original tapes or photos.

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Richard "Pistol" Allen

Motown Master

Rick Van Horn

Richard "Pistol" Allen died Sunday, June 30 after a long battle with cancer. He was sixty-nine.

Pistol was one of a triumvirate of Detroit drummers (along with Benny Benjamin and Uriel Jones) who played on most of the classic singles released by Motown records in the 1960s. Though the three men were shrouded in anonymity, their groundbreaking grooves on those early records formed the backbone of modern R&B, pop, and funk.

Pistol Allen was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and relocated to Detroit in the 1950s. He quickly established a reputation by playing in some of that city's hottest clubs. It wasn't long before he was invited to join The Funk Brothers—the crack studio band backing all the up-and-coming Motown artists. Among the classic hits that feature Pistol's signature drumming are Martha & The Vandellas' "Heat Wave," The Supremes' "Baby Love," The Temptations' "The Way You Do The Things You Do," The Four Tops' "Reach Out I'll Be There," and Stevie Wonder's "Uptight (Everything's Alright)." Pistol co-drummed with Uriel Jones on Edwin Starr's "War," and with Jones and Benny Benjamin on Marvin Gaye's "I Heard It Through The Grapevine."

MD's July 1999 feature "The Drummers Of Motown" stated, "The beat that Uriel, Benny, and Pistol delivered was an irresistible, 8th-note, hi-hat-driven groove punctuated with a sledge-hammer backbeat. The dance floors of the world didn't stand a chance."

This writer had the opportunity to meet Pistol Allen in July of 2000, when I moderated an R&B Drummers Roundtable at the Nashville Percussion Institute. He was the "grand old man" on a panel of such stellar drummers as Clyde Stubblefield, Jabo Starks, Charles Collins, Ed Greene, Zoro, and Eric Hargrove. Although frail in health, Pistol was excited to be taking part in the event. He spoke enthusiastically and knowledgeably about drumming in general, but was modest about his own contributions. And he was genuinely touched when, at the conclusion of the session, audience and panel alike honored him with a standing ovation. It was a fitting tribute to a man who helped get millions of people "out of their seat and on their feet."

Rick Van Horn

Toomas Paiste

Cymbal Scion

Paiste Cymbal Company director Toomas Paiste was killed in a tragic accident on Friday, August 9, 2002. While taking an evening walk at the ocean in Spain, he fell off a shore wall onto the rocks below. Never regaining conciousness, he died from his injuries.

Toomas was born in 1939 in Tallinin, Estonia, and moved with his family to Poland during the Second World War. He relocated to Germany in 1945, where he completed his education. He began working for the Paiste company in 1960, alternating his time between Germany and the company's headquarters in Switzerland. In the early 1980s he lived in the US while he worked to establish Paiste America.

In his capacity as the supreme ambassador for the Paiste company, Toomas traveled extensively around the world. In a career that spanned more than forty years in the percussion industry, he became a living icon within the business. He was well known as an enthusiastic advocate for his company and as a gracious host and gentleman.

In a moving tribute to his father, Toomas's son Erik (president of Paiste America) stated, "My father was a strong and determined man—always fair and consistent. But even though he was a tough businessman, he had a playful and fun-loving approach that got us through many a rough spot. Wisdom, honesty, attitude, and style were the key elements of his character.

"Toomas's dedication to uncompromising excellence manifested itself in the quality of our products and the image of our company," Erik continued. "He deeply loved what he was doing and the people he did it with, from the craftsmen and staff to the dealers and artists."

In addition to the development and sale of Paiste percussion products, Toomas Paiste was also very interested in music education. Accordingly, in tribute to his memory, the Paiste company has established the Toomas Paiste Education Fund to help underpriviledged young musicians. Information may be obtained by emailing tvoellmy@paiste.com (Paiste Switzerland) or ashreve@paiste.com (Paiste America).

Rick Van Horn

REMO

Heads And Beyond

by Rick Van Horn

In 1957 Remo Belli made a career change. He went from drumshop owner to manufacturer of synthetic drumheads. It was a bold step, since his retail business was successful, while the future of drumhead manufacturing was anything but guaranteed.

Obviously, it turned out to be a good move for Remo. Over the ensuing forty-five years his company has grown into the world's largest manufacturer of drumheads. Along the way, production has expanded to include drumsets, marching drums, a dizzying array of traditional and totally original world percussion instruments, and some unique percussion devices that defy categorization.

In 1994 Remo (the company) moved from their long-time home in North Hollywood to new facilities in Valencia, California, some thirty miles to the north. The move involved much more than simply relocating existing machinery and processes to a bigger space. It was an opportunity to completely update the company's manufacturing technology.

Remo now has 216,000 square feet of factory space under one roof. Raw materials come in at one end, and production flows to the other. Drumhead production is on one side of the building; world percussion and drumkits are on the other. Everything ends up at the shipping area, where nine loading bays are constantly busy.

Eight years after Remo's move, product designer Herbie May is still excited about the innovation going on in the new facility. "That should be the whole theme for this story," he says. "What we're doing differently, and why it's better. Some people may think that because we've been doing things for a long time, we do them on autopilot. Nothing could be further from

Ebony head with computer-created drumhead graphics

"The reason we are where we are as a percussion manufacturer is because we make drumheads. Believe me, we never lose sight of that fundamental fact."

Remo president Brock Kaericher

Remo Roundup

Few percussion manufacturers offer as comprehensive a product line as Remo does. Here's a quick overview, ranging from the essential to the esoteric.

Drumheads

DIPLOMAT, AMBASSADOR, EMPEROR

The foundation of Remo's product line is actually a very diverse range of specialized models. The WeatherKing series of drumset heads includes Diplomat, Ambassador, and Emperor models (designated according to their weight and ply structure). These heads are available in coated, clear, or smooth white versions, and represent a significant percentage of all drumheads in use world-wide.

Ambassador

PINSTRIPE, SUEDE, CONTROLLED SOUND

Also in the WeatherKing line are PinStripe heads (popular for their mellow tone), Suede heads (textured to combine the brightness of clear heads with the midrange articulation of coated heads), and Controlled Sound models (the famous high-impact "black dot" heads, which are also available with clear or white dots).

Pinstripe

POWERSTROKE

PowerStroke 3 and PowerStroke 4 heads feature a thin underlay at the outer edge of the head to dampen unwanted overring. They're available in a variety of weights, films, and coating styles, and are especially popular for snare and bass drum applications.

PowerStroke 3

FIBERSKYN 3

FiberSkyn 3 heads feature a lamination process that combines Remo films and synthetic fibers to recreate the "vintage sound, look, and feel" of calfskin. They offer a dark, warm tone recommended for jazz, R&B, and classic rock drumset use, as well as for concert drums and world percussion instruments.

RENAISSANCE

Renaissance heads were originally created to replace the ultra-sensitive "slunk" calfskin heads used on concert timpani. Further development led to a line of drumset and concert-drum heads in a full range of weights. Their textured surface provides a "wide yet balanced spectrum of sound."

Renaissance

MARCHING HEADS

Marching snare batters from Remo include Falams II Kevlar models, Black Max and White Max heads combining Aramid fibers with Mylar film, and PowerStroke II and PowerStroke 77 Mylar heads with clear dots. Tom heads include new CrimpLock models (with special reinforced steel hoops), marching PinStripes, and various Emperor models. Marching bass drum heads are available in Ambassador and Emperor models in a variety of coatings.

Black Max & White Max

EBONY, TIMPANI HEADS, GRAPHICS

Also available from Remo are Ebony (smooth black) heads (popular for use on the fronts of bass drums and the bottoms of toms), along with over forty sizes of timpani heads in Standard or Renaissance films. And recently the company has introduced computer-created drumhead graphics set within the film itself, so the image cannot wear off. (See left.)

ETHNIC PERCUSSION HEADS

NuSkyn

In the area of ethnic percussion, Remo offers FiberSkyn 3 and NuSkyn conga, bongo, and djembe heads, and a wide variety of Mondo heads for other ethnic drums. FiberSkyn 3 heads feature CrimpLock hoops, and offer lively overtones. NuSkyn heads are actually wrapped around a steel insert ring just as animal skins are tucked around flesh hoops. The heads are said to sound "natural, warm, and full-bodied, with enhanced low and midrange frequencies."

Drums

MASTEREDGE

The top of Remo's drumset line is the MasterEdge series, which features the company's unique Acousticon shell. Snare drums are also a specialty of the company, including new models with metalized shells.

MasterEdge Set

WORLD PERCUSSION

Ethnic drums of every nationality—along with some totally original "hybrids"—are in Remo's World Percussion series. These include Tuff-E-Nuff congas (featuring a durable black textured coating), cable and rope-tuned djembes, Tubanos, tambourines, Nagado (taiko) drums, and bongos. The total line features dozens of drum models from Africa, Asia, North America, Latin America, the Middle East, and Europe.

Prizmatic Head tambourines and tubano

Tuff-E-Nuff Congas

Nagado

Rope-tuned djembes

Kid's Percussion, Rhythm Club, Sound Shapes

Kid's Percussion

Getting young people interested in drumming is a major mission at Remo. For that purpose they offer a complete line of Kid's Percussion instruments, along with the lower-priced Rhythm Club series. Also available are Sound Shapes—pre-tensioned heads in various geometrically shaped frames that bring percussion capability to absolutely *anyone*.

Sound Shapes

Rhythm Club series

muffling system

Accessories

Accessories from Remo include unique snare- and bass-drum muffling systems developed with Dave Weckl. Also available are practice pads, Muff'ls muffling systems, Putty Pads, and DynamOs, which serve as both cutting template and reinforcing ring for holes in bass drum heads.

the truth."

Drumhead R&D

At Remo, drumhead research & development begins with the plastic film itself. Then variables like coatings and laminates are considered. Says Herbie May, "We have a staff of chemists with whom we'll talk about what kind of sound we want—what we want to get from a specific application."

Remo's newest drumhead development is NuSkyn, a head that re-creates the dark, warm tonality of calfskin. At the 2002 Frankfurt Musik Messe trade show, the existing models for congas, bongos, and djembes received the M.I.P.A. (Music International Press Award) for best new drumheads. NuSkyn heads for other drums are under development—a process that Herbie May says is pretty involved.

"There's a lot more to drumhead development than buying ready-made film and fixing it into a hoop," says Herbie. "Just as one example, to create a NuSkyn concert bass-drum head, we've tried over a hundred seventy-five samplings. And that's only one film. It doesn't count laminations or coatings we might apply to the top, the bottom, or both sides."

Once prototype drumheads are created, extensive testing takes place, including high-tech acoustic evaluation. "We test the sonic properties of our heads by sampling the various sounds and taking a look at them graphically," Herbie explains. "This allows us to see the frequency curve—where the dominant pitch is and what the overtone series are. Obviously, using our ears is the best test, but having the capability to sample and view the sounds gives us a graphic basis of comparison. After we've isolated two or three different versions that we feel are the best out of all the samples, we send them out to artists and customers for field testing."

Communications director Tim Ridgway adds that Remo's R&D in the area of marching drumheads has been extremely successful. "Last year our new Suede Crimp-Lock heads were used by the Cavaliers and the Blue Devils, who finished first and second, respectively, in the DCI championships. This year was the first time that we sponsored the three biggest parades in this country: The Tournament of Roses, The Hollywood Christmas Parade, and The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Our marching heads literally dominate the genre, and that's because of their performance qualities and the variety that we offer."

"Our commitment to R&D drives everything we do here," says Herbie May. "I believe we have the best manufacturing capabilities and the best-designed drumheads out there. The films we use, the laminations we apply, and the processes we employ are all unique to us. I wouldn't change it a bit."

Key faces at Remo, clockwise from top left: president Brock Kaericher, communications director Tim Ridgway, and product designer Herbie May.

And Drums, Too

Innovation at Remo isn't limited to drumheads. For example, in 2001 the company developed a new formulation of their proprietary Acousticon material, creating Advanced Acousticon drumshells. "They're much more resonant than our previous shells," says Herbie May. "A while back we tried putting molded bearing edges on drumset drums to improve resonance. Frankly, it just didn't work. But utilizing the new shell technology will allow us to take a whole new look at drumset design."

Remo has also recently introduced a series of metalized snare drums, featuring the improved Acousticon shell material and several other new concepts. "The drums also have a new throw-off," says Herbie. "It's simple and very quiet, and it works well. We're also using new snare wire that brightens up the sound, as well as a snare-mounting system that makes the drum much more sensitive. It's the best-sounding snare drum we've ever had."

It's also a unique-looking snare drum, due to its metalized finish over the Acousticon shell. "We've tried bronze, brass, silver, and copper," Herbie says. "The coating weighs virtually nothing, so it doesn't have any discernable effect on the drum's sound. Yet it looks terrific, and it's very hard—which will add to the durability of the shell."

Tim Ridgway adds, "We're also looking into applying the metalizing process to hand percussion. We already make drums like doumbeks, which are normally made out of metal. Now we can offer much lighter Acousticon instruments that still have that authentic metal look."

Getting The Word Out

Brock Kaericher, who took over the presidency of Remo Inc. worldwide late in 2001, explains the company's approach to selling their products. "We take very seriously the responsibility of presenting percussion in all forms and at all levels," he says. "That is, while we make professional-quality instruments for the world's greatest artists, we also make affordable, fun products that we want to put into *everybody*'s hands. We spend a tremendous amount of money and effort developing programs like the weekly drum gatherings at the Remo Percussion Center, the industry drum circle at NAMM, and events like the recent drum festival held in Hong Kong, where two thousand people were involved. Those are all programs that Remo pushes constantly to literally put the product directly into consumers' hands."

Tim Ridgway adds, "We sponsor clinics and artist days all over the world. In 2001 we sponsored twenty-seven world-percussion drum clinics in MARS Music stores. Guitar Center has a Remo tent that goes from store to store for world-percussion and drumset clinics. Our clinic program is available to smaller retailers as well. We're committed to getting the message out there!"

Drumhead Production

A detailed description of how Remo makes their drumheads would take longer than this article allows. So we'll synopsize the process, stopping only to discuss key elements of design and manufacturing that set Remo heads apart.

Hoops

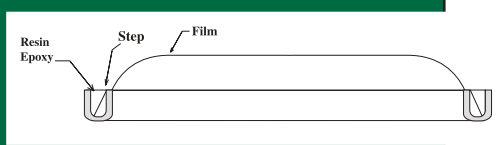
Drumhead hoops begin as flat strips of aluminum, which are machined to form u-shaped channels and then formed into circular coils. Each coil is cut into fifty identical hoops. Until a few years ago, the ends of these hoops were joined with small clips. Now all hoops are brazed together on robotic carousels that automatically create a join with a surface so strong and smooth that no further processing is required. With five carousels, Remo's hoop-making capacity allows the production of up to 25,000 drumheads per day.

Forming The Heads

All Remo heads begin with a DuPont Mylar film. Different films are used for different heads. Some are used as is, others receive special processes in the Remo plant to become FiberSkyn, Renaissance, Suede, or NuSkyn models. After the film is die-cut into disks, each disk has holes punched in its outer perimeter in order to give the resin adhesive something to grab the film with.

The flat disks of film are molded into heads using a heat-press system that employs metal templates for each size of head. Heads are formed one or two at a time, depending on the thickness of the film. Responding to competitors' statements about potential size inconsistency as a result of multi-head forming, Herbie May says, "We don't think a difference of .007" between two different pieces of polyester film can be perceived in terms of how they fit onto a counterhoop, and how the resulting head mates onto a drumshell. The important thing is how each piece of film fits into the hoop, how the counterhoop comes down, and how it rests on the bearing edge."

The fit of the film into the hoop is so important to Remo that each of their drumheads features a special design to make sure that fit is perfect. In the case of WeatherKing drumset heads, this design involves what Herbie calls a "step" that's molded into the collar portion of the head. (See the cross-section at right.) "The step does two things," says Herbie. It kicks the film all the way in so the drum's counterhoop rests on the drumhead hoop itself, rather than on the film at the collar. But more importantly, it makes sure that the head is perfectly level across the hoop when we glue the film into it. The step is an alignment mechanism to make sure that one side isn't higher than the other. Without that step, the leg of the collar can slip and slide within the resin. Some other manufacturers go to great lengths to keep the plane of the head flat and true as the head seats on the bearing edge of a drum. With our "step" design, it's automatic. The film is formed that way. It's a tried-and-true design that's worked for years—and it's still the best way to make a head."



Besides serving to seat the head properly, the "step" that Herbie refers to is also the source of the famous "cracking" sound that drummers hear when they first tension Remo heads. "The cracking sound is that shelf being pulled straight as the film is tightened," explains Herbie. "A lot of people think the cracking sound is the plastic film pulling out of the resin in the hoop. If that were the case, the head would be useless. In fact, the sound is an indication that the head is seated properly and will tune easily."

A happy man: company founder and namesake Remo Belli

Gluing The Heads In The Hoops

The adhesive that holds the film in the aluminum drumhead hoop is dispensed into the channel of each hoop by a computer-controlled machine that determines the exact amount for each size and thickness of head. Certain marching heads feature a combination design that's both glued and crimp-locked for extra rigidity and strength.

Twin-ply heads, like Emperors and PinStripes, are fitted into their hoops by means of a process that applies pressure from one side of the head to the other, rather than around the entire edge at one time. This rolls out any air bubbles between the sheets of film that might deaden the tonality of the finished head.

PinStripe heads are known for their ring of adhesive between the plies at the outer edge of the head. However, what isn't widely known is that on today's PinStripes, that ring is a "dry" layer applied to each individual sheet of film. It does not bond the two sheets together when the head is formed. The effect is to mellow the tone, without deadening it.

Final Touches

After the heads have been formed and fitted into their hoops, many enter a room-sized spraying booth, where they receive Remo's famous white coating. Others remain uncoated, but receive "dots" to become Controlled Sound models. Heads destined for use by endorsing artists receive large, high-visibility logo stamps. Remo stresses that those logos are the only difference between "artist" heads and heads designated for sale to consumers or installation on new drums by manufacturers.

Among the company's more esoteric activities is the creation of custom heads, such as metric sizes or heads for the giant marching bass drums used by some universities. And recently a new process of applying graphics to the drumhead film itself has allowed Remo to create heads with images that cannot wear off. These may be relatively minor markets in the grand scheme of things. But Remo's philosophy is: "If it can be done with a drumhead, we want to be the ones doing it."

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Educating The Customer

According to Brock, Remo's major challenge when it comes to world percussion instruments isn't *making* them, but rather educating people on how to *use* them. "I've gotten many calls from dealers saying, 'We don't even know what to do with this drum,'" Brock says. "So we offer educational programs for dealers and consumers alike. Dealers can piggyback those educational programs with the sort of drum gatherings that Remo Belli encourages—utilizing their venue to generate interest in drumming as a recreational activity. They can also create an ongoing series of instructional clinics or workshops for more serious players. That way, everybody benefits—the drummer, the dealer, and us.

"We also offer a world-drumming packet published by Hal Leonard," Brock continues. "It contains a book, a video, and a series of pass-out flyers for students. It's a great package for educators on how to play these instruments. And our percussion education specialist, Chalo Eduardo, will have a video and a CD ROM available very soon. Chalo is also developing a new series of instructional hang tags for all our world percussion products. The tags will include a brief history of the instrument, along with some basic playing patterns."

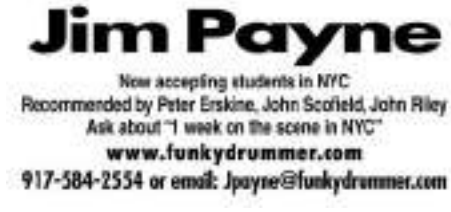
All of Remo's educational efforts aren't focused on world percussion. The company is currently considering putting a pocket-sized flyer called "How To Tune Your Drums" into a drumhead value pack. It's authored by Dave Black and published in Alfred Publishing's *Drum Shop* series. "We get lots of inquires about tuning," says Brock. "Drummers need that information, and we can provide it through our dealers."

Whither Drumheads?

All this talk about Remo's world percussion leads to a delicate but unavoidable issue, which Brock Kaericher raises himself. "I often get the impression," he says, "that people think that since we've entered the realm of world percussion, we've kind of left drumheads behind. That's the farthest thing from the truth. The reason we are where we are as a percussion manufacturer is *because* we make drumheads. Believe me, we never lose sight of that fundamental fact. We are constantly researching, testing, and upgrading our processes and equipment, in order to maintain—and improve—the quantity and the quality of our drumhead products.

"We are very proud of the fact that we supply heads to virtually every major drum manufacturer, with the exception of Tama and Ludwig. Yamaha, Pearl, DW, Mapex, Sonor, Premier—they all use Remo heads. And the reason for that is the quality and reliability of the product. Last year we developed the marketing theme of 'Remo On Top,' which has a double meaning. It refers to the fact that Remo heads are on the top—and bottom—of most of the drums being played today. It also refers to the fact that we are, as we have always been, the top manufacturer of drumhead products worldwide."

Tim Ridgway concludes, "We don't take our position as the world leader in drumheads lightly. We appreciate being considered the standard point of reference for drumhead sound and quality. But we also appreciate that when you *are* the standard, you can't take that for granted. You don't leave things alone. You give respect and attention to those things that *make* your product the standard, and you constantly progress with those elements."



TRENDS

Drumming For The New Duos

Cash Audio, Local H, The White Stripes, And Jucifer

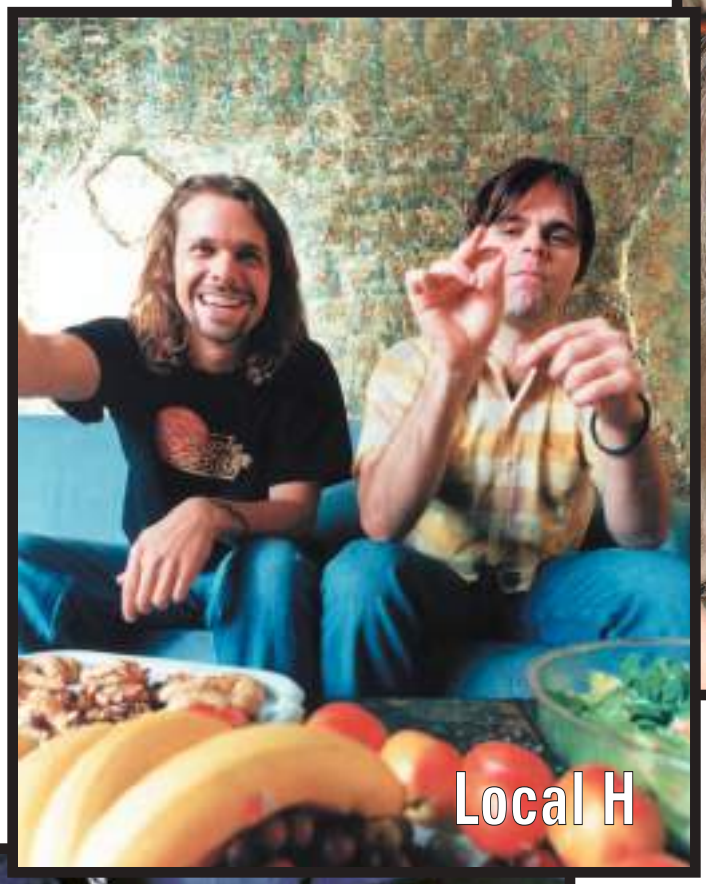
by Jim DeRogatis

This month we're introducing a new recurring feature called "Trends," in which Chicago critic and drummer Jim DeRogatis dives deep into the musical underground in search of drumming ideas, techniques, and instruments that are taking on new currency among cutting-edge players.

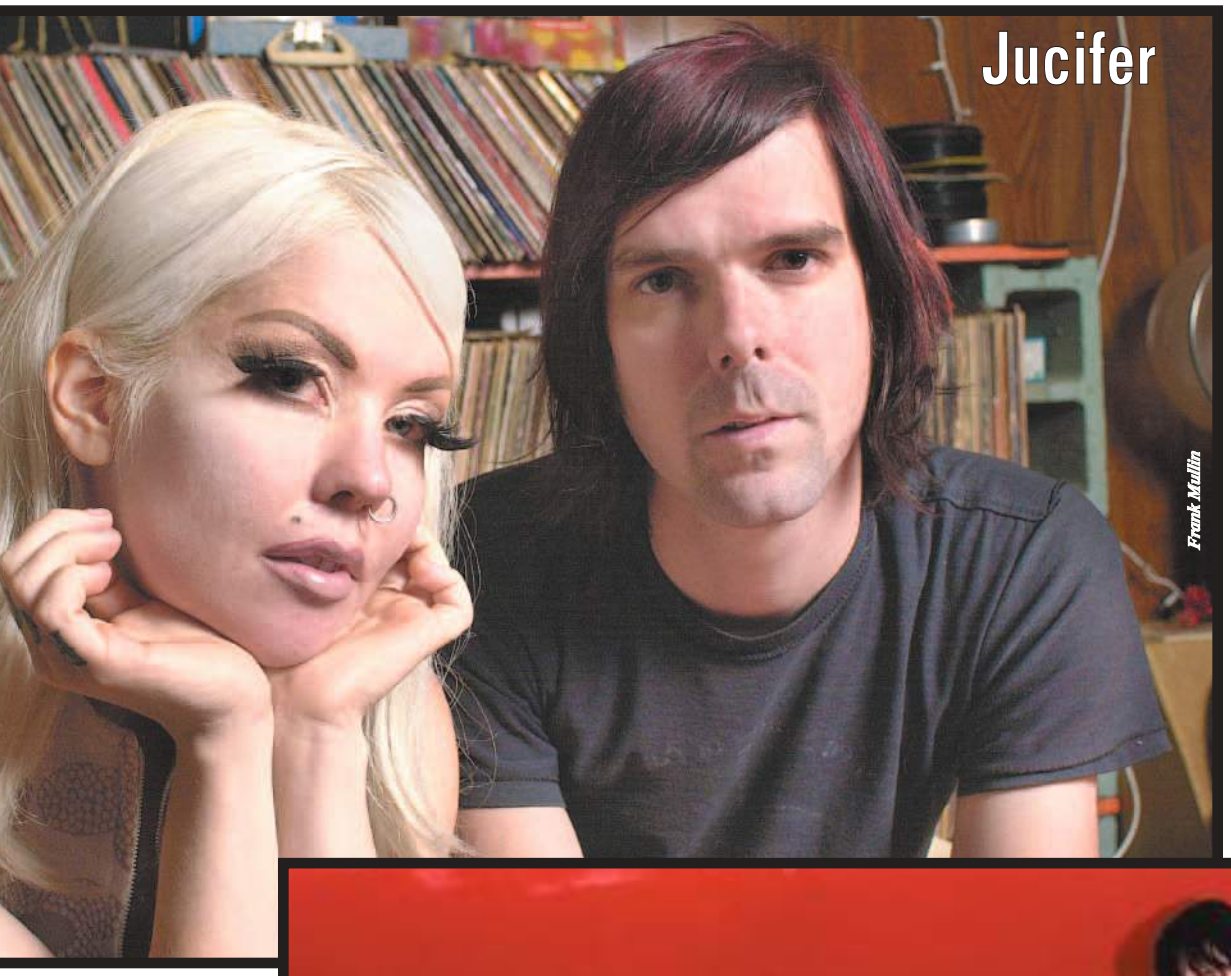
Why have three, four, or more when you can do it with two? That's the question being posed by a growing number of rock bands. The White Stripes, Local H, Cash Audio, Jucifer, Swearing At Motorists, The Spinanes, Helio Sequence, Quasi, The Soledad Brothers, and Hella are working in a wide array of genres ranging from garage rock to trashy blues, rockabilly to punk, and art rock to heavy metal. What they all have in common is a decision to limit the size of the band to two members, generally guitar and drums.

The idea of a two-man or two-woman band certainly isn't a new one. Blues great John Lee Hooker often performed with just a drummer, as did rockabilly madman Hasil Adkins and surf guitarist Link Wray. Sometimes, it's a matter of convenience or practicality: Fewer members means fewer people to pay and transport. But just as often it's a situation where two musicians share a unique chemistry that would only be diluted if there were three, or it's an aesthetic decision that more instruments would detract from the sound rather than add to it.

Drummers who step into a duo face some unique challenges. One is that they usually set up much closer to the front of the stage, parallel with their partner, and that means they're much more visible and a bigger part of the show. There are also some particular musical hurdles that come from playing with one musician instead of several. In order to get a handle on these, we spoke with four distinctly different but equally worthy drummers in four acclaimed duos.


Local H

Cash Audio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Scott Giampino, Cash Audio

Unlike many two-man bands, when drummer Scott Giampino and guitarist-vocalist John Humphrey formed Cash Audio in 1994, they were determined to avoid adding a bassist. "Bass was just something that we knew we didn't want," Giampino says. "We're not anti–bass player. We get a lot of people at shows who are like, 'So, where's your bass player?' It's always bass players who ask us that. They're like, 'There's a lot of cool bass lines I could be playing!' And we're like, 'Hey, got your gear? Bring it on!' And they never do."

"I'm half the band, so I have to give people something to latch onto, as opposed to just playing John Bonham."

The band's goal was to take the blues back to the garage, "send it through the meat grinder, turn it up, amplify it, and get a lot of power behind it," according to Scott. And it has succeeded admirably, on stage and on albums such as 2000's *Green Bullet* (Touch And Go). Having a bass—or a third member on any other instrument—just didn't fit the plan.

"Initially when we formed, we were like, 'We'll do this as a two-piece and maybe I'll get a trigger pad to have more sounds and colors.' But that just never gelled," Giampino says. "So we tried to get a really big, full sound and represent a full band with just two guys, as opposed to sounding like a plinky guitar and a drummer. Obviously you're not going to hear the bass, but we didn't want it to feel like anything was missing."

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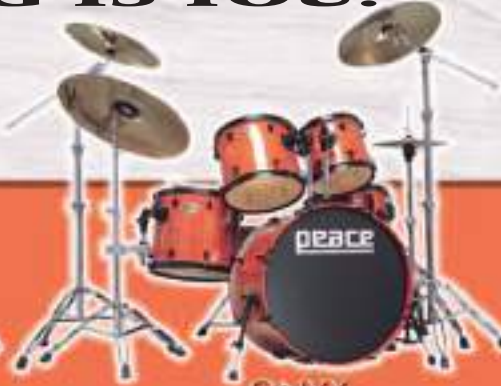

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To compensate, Humphrey (a recording engineer and co-owner of Engine Room Studios) augments his amp by running the guitar direct through the P.A. and rolling off the mid and high frequencies. And Giampino altered his playing style to become more frenetic and angular (before Cash Audio, he'd played in more conventional combos such as The Rosehips and The Mystery Girls), as well as becoming more of a showman.

"I had to be more in the front style-wise," he explains, "maybe not more busy, but with more accents, and more lively. I'm half the band, so I have to give people something to latch onto, as opposed to just playing John Bonham." Tall and lanky, Giampino dwarfs his relatively small drumset. Scott uses a 20" bass drum and 16" floor tom, both 1965 Slingerlands with a blue psychedelic wave finish. He also uses a vintage Gretsch chrome snare, a couple of cymbals, and an 18" cast-iron pan. On special occasions, he'll flip the pan over and fry some bacon on a small hotplate beside the drums.

"You know, we're big guys and we're from the Midwest," Giampino says, laughing. "When we toured with Man Or Astroman, they were like, 'You guys are the sound of bacon cooking!' So we decided to add that to the set. It's a great smell, it fits our sound, and it brings people to the front of the audience. And when they're drunk, everybody loves bacon. It reminds people of grandma's house."

According to Giampino, the best thing about being a duo is that it's simply easier to get things done with two people. "We went on tour with The Quadrajets, and as soon as it ended, they broke up the band and became a two-piece, The Immortal Lee County Killers," he says. "John always says other people are ripping us off, but I remind him that there've been two-man bands for fifty years!" Giampino's goal is to set up a festival bill of nothing but guitar and drum duos. "I love playing with other two-pieces," he says, "especially live, because we just take 'em to task!"

Brian St. Clair, Local H

With four albums to their credit and several radio hits including 1996's "Bound For The Floor," Local H is one of the most well-known of the two-piece rock bands working today. But it's a new version of the Chicago duo that is currently touring in support of *Here Comes The Zoo* (Palm Pictures), with Brian St. Clair replacing Joe Daniels as guitarist-vocalist Scott Lucas's partner.

St. Clair is an unrelentingly hard hitter who plays butt-end and uses only ride cymbals. (He cracks or dents anything lighter.) "A lot of people have said I'm Animal from the Muppets, and I can see where they would say that," he says. Brian developed his style in the punk-rock underground, playing in groups such as God's Acre, Rights Of The Accused, and Triple Fast Action, which frequently toured with Local H. In between, he worked as a drum tech for Cheap Trick.

"I knew Joe and Scott for a long time," St. Clair says. "When I got the call to join Local H, I listened to the previous three records, and you could tell that Joe put a lot of thought into what he was doing; it wasn't just like he walked in and threw something down. It almost sounded like his kick was playing to the vocal line. You don't really hear that too much—Bun E. Carlos is the only other person I can think of who plays these weird kick patterns. I wanted to stay true to the band and the style, but at the same time, I'm a completely different drummer from Joe, with different influences and a different background."

The transition from a larger band to a duo wasn't too difficult for St. Clair in the recording studio, because Local H does use bass guitar on its recordings. "I basically play off the bass line, which is pretty typical for a rock drummer, so I think in that aspect I may be a little bit more straightforward than Joe," he says. But taking to his Premier Artist Maples onstage was now a different experience. (In concert, the only other instrument is Lucas's guitar, though, like

Cash Audio, the sound is tweaked by being fed through other amplifiers to boost the low end.)

"I definitely had to just take it over the top," St. Clair says. "From the first second I get on stage all the way through to the end, it's just so draining with Local H. I'm stage right, Scott is stage left, and we're right up front. To sit back and just kind of play and not really get into the music, the stage would be completely lopsided. So I have to take it up a notch from Triple Fast Action. But I also found that we lock in much better as a duo than with four guys because you don't have the other elements of someone else screwing up. Once you're locked, you're locked in."

"To sit back and just kind of play and not really get into the music, the stage would be completely lopsided. I have to take it up a notch."

What's the biggest benefit St. Clair has found from being in a two-piece? "There's one less person to argue with," he says, laughing. "My advice is, if you've got a best friend or a wife or a girlfriend who plays the other instrument, it's like, 'Why should we deal with some other guy?' A lot of times you hear about bands where everybody hates this one guy. Well, just get rid of him!"

"I know the way Jack plays so well now that I almost always know what he's going to do."

Patrick Pantano

Meg White, The White Stripes

Meg White is the youngest and least experienced of the drummers profiled here. But her direct, stripped-down style is integral to the bluesy garage rock of The White Stripes, the Detroit duo that she formed with her brother, Jack. The band scored an impressive hit in the U.K. with "Fell In Love With A Girl," and it's beginning to win a large audience in the US for its third album, *White Blood Cells* (V2), garnering appearances on MTV and *The Late Show With David Letterman*.

"I started playing about five years ago," Meg says. "We had a drumset in the house, and basically I just sat down one day and started drumming on it. Jack started playing some guitar and it just kind of went from there. He appreciated

the childlike element in it, because I hadn't really figured out the drums yet."

According to Jack, Meg is modest to a fault. "She's perfect; she's the best part of the band, really," he says. "Her style is just so simple that I can work around it and work with it. We have this kind of telepathy on stage where we can just read each other's minds. If we had anybody else on stage it would just get ruined, I think. It feels really good to perform like that."

Justin Guavin

Meg has only played with a bassist on one occasion, when The White Stripes were joined onstage for a few AC/DC covers. "That night, it was weird having to pay attention to more than one person!" she says. But she seconds her brother's comments about their telepathy, and she admirably navigates the twists and turns when he deconstructs the songs onstage. "The only way I can get in touch with a song every time we play it is to break it up as much as possible, destroy it, and then recover it," Jack says. "It's like we're doing a cover version of a song I wrote."

Adds Meg, "I know the way Jack plays so well now that I almost always know what he's going to do. I can sense where he's going with things just by the mood he's in or the attitude or how the song is going. Once in a while, he throws me for a loop, but I can usually keep him where I want him."

Meg has never taken a lesson, isn't particularly obsessed with gear (she plays Pearl), and says her pre-show warm-up consists of "whiskey and Red Bull." Not surprisingly, her hero is another female primitivist: Moe Tucker of The Velvet Underground.

"I appreciate other kinds of drummers who play differently, but it's not my style or what works for this band," she says. "I get criticized sometimes, and I go through periods where it really bothers me. But then I think about it, and I realize that this is what is really needed for this band. And I just try to have as much fun with it as possible."

Frank Mullin

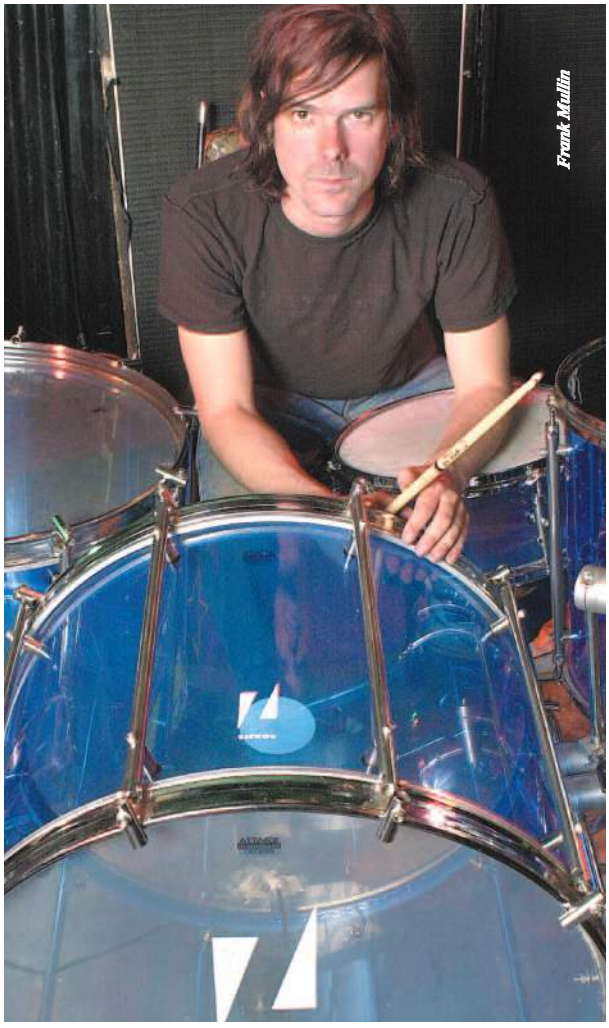
Ed Livengood, Jucifer

When Ed Livengood first played in rock bands, it was as a guitarist and bassist. "I always wanted to play drums, but I couldn't have a drumkit in my parents' house when I was growing up," he says. Ed got his first set in 1991, and he's been behind it ever since. Livengood hones a super-high-energy style that perfectly fits the psychedelic-tinged art-rock of Jucifer, the Athens, Georgia duo that he formed in 1992 with his girlfriend, guitarist-vocalist Amber Valentine.

"Early on, I was playing bass," Livengood says. "We tried to get a drummer for a long time, and we just couldn't find

anybody. So I started playing drums, and we had this bass rig sitting around, and one day Amber and I were like, 'What would happen if we took the Marshall and ran it into the bass cabinet?' It sounded really good, and by the time we finally got the dream bass player we wanted, there was just too much bass. At that point, we'd already established our songwriting dynamic, and we just kind of decided it would be fun to be a duo."

Jucifer's sound certainly isn't lacking, either on the recent album *I Name You Destroyer* (Velocette) or in live performance, where Valentine provides an icy contrast to Livengood's frantic pummeling of an oversized kit specially made for him by Zickos. "They're totally handmade, and they're just beautiful drums," he says. "I've got an 18x26 kick, an 18" rack tom, and an 18x24 floor tom that's basically a modified kick drum. The way they mike the floor tom, it kind of makes up for what the bass guitar would be doing, especially with some of the parts that I do on it. I tune it up pretty high, and it has this kind of timpani sound. I can do this thing with my wrist where I hit it and then do a kind of brush stroke to get different tones, and it's harder to do that with a smaller drum."


Frank Mullin

"When there's only two people, if you miss a part or do something wrong, it's obvious."

Livengood continues to drum in other side projects, but he notices some distinct differences playing in bigger bands after being in a duo. "Having a bass player there means that if you kind of mess up a beat, you can catch it better," he says. "When there's only two people, if you miss a part or do something wrong, it's obvious. And now I'm just so used to being up front, like a couple of feet from the front row or whatever, that it's a charging experience. The audience is part of the show, and they can make the energy go way up."

But, he adds, "The two-piece thing is definitely not for everybody. For us, it was actually an accident, and it seems like the most successful two-pieces are the ones where it just kind of happens that way."

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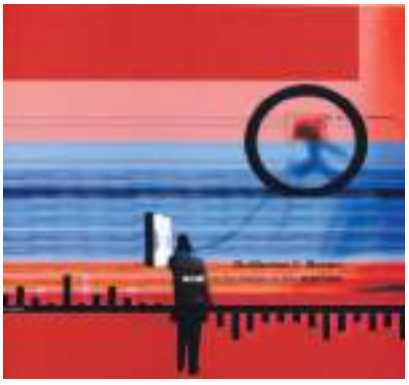


Assimilating the nutty programming skills of Kid Koala, the combustible set work of Jack DeJohnette, and the feverish hand drumming of Weather Report–era Manolo Badrena (as well as WR's cosmic melodic approach), **GUILLERMO E. BROWN** is a musician on fire. His brilliant debut cuts through diverse, deconstructionist jazz styles with an original touch. Even when fried by machines, Brown's music perpetually swings, from the Wayne Shorter-ish "Manganese," to the programmed psycho drum war in "…Find A Way," to the ethereal Latin rhythms of "Basso.ritmo.luz." Recalling the lushly disturbed music of Latin-jazz rebel Kip Hanrahan, Brown infuses *Soul* with disruption, romance, and an exotic, even alien sense of mystery. His drumming is equally captivating, as he nervously jabs and somersaults the music with gritty rhythms and slaphappy punctuations. **Ken Micallef**

7 Glassjaw Worship And Tribute (Warner Bros.)

Although there's enough nu-metal these days to fill an entire record store's shelves, it would be wrong to finger Glassjaw as one of those who are simply trend-following sheep. Extracting their heavy sound from underground hardcore, the act features a raw, indie style, gently polished by major-label wax. The dancing foot- and stick-work of **LARRY GORMAN** is satisfying, tasteful, and deftly captured by veteran producer Ross Robinson. From the China-smashing intro of "Stuck Pig" to the up-tempo, melodic "Radio Cambodia," there are plenty of punches, accents, and kicks to make *Worship And Tribute* an engaging listen. **Waleed Rashidi**

8 Jeff "Tain" Watts Bar Talk (Columbia)

With his debut, *Citizen Tain*, **JEFF WATTS** shook off the dust of the "drummer only" label and entered the realm of composer made good. *Citizen* featured the expected rhythmic fireworks, but also showed Watts to be a keen tunesmith. *Bar Talk* again highlights Watts' melodic talents, but pushes the music much further. Complicated arrangements with multiple odd-meter sections abound, and tenor saxophonists **Michael Brecker**, **Branford Marsalis**, and **Ravi Coltrane** and rising piano star **David Budway** all take killer solos. Watts only nabs two himself (including a subtle tribute on "Laughin' And Talkin' With Higgins"), but still takes care of business. **Ken Micallef**

8 Soulfly 3 (Roadrunner)

Hailing from the Brazilian breeding grounds of killer metal, Soulfly's latest installment finds drummer **ROY MAYORGA** back behind the kit after taking a leave of absence for a few years. Though the now-departed Joe Nunez held his ground during Mayorga's hiatus, having Mayorga back in the lineup feels like finding a pair of long-lost, comfortable shoes. His ballistic fills during the transitional ending of "Enter Faith" are spot-on, and there's a healthy dose of tasteful tribal tom work complementing the percussion throughout. A noteworthy and highly welcomed return to a powerful throne. **Waleed Rashidi**

8 John Surman & Jack DeJohnette Invisible Nature: Live In Tampere And Berlin (ECM)

JACK DEJOHNETTE is following in the footsteps of his friend, the late Stu Martin, who recorded a live duet with saxophonist Surman at Woodstock Town Hall years ago. The current album bears similarities—an ambient sound and frisky experimentation—but keeps the reins on the energy level. Surman is playing East-meets-West horn lines that would charm a snake rather than provoke it. Mostly improvised, *Invisible Nature* is infinitely more listenable than a spate of recent extemporised jazz releases. The rapport is substantial, with DeJohnette's measured percussion and electronics, sparkling drumming, and memorable piano playing acting as the perfect foil to Surman's contemplative lines. **T. Bruce Wittet**

9 Halford Crucible (Metal-Is/Sanctuary)

Rob Halford and great drummers go hand in hand. This was certainly apparent when the singer fronted metal legends Judas Priest and his post-Priest group Fight. Halford's third solo album is a stunning slab of metal, and **BOBBY JARZOMBEK**'s drumming is a prime reason. On propulsive scorchers like "Betrayal" (which begins with a dazzling mini-solo), "Heretic," and "Handing Out Bullets," the drummer shows astonishing power and precision while Halford's soaring vocals launch into a new realm. Meanwhile, during "Crystal," "Sun," and the epic "Golgotha" (now *there's* a metal title), Jarzombek anchors some wildly intriguing compositions. The Metal God knows how to pick 'em. **Jeff Perlah**

WHAT IN THE WORLD

On *Mondo Head* legendary Taiko group **KODO** are joined by several distinguished guest percussionists, including album producer **MICKEY HART**. A nice opportunity for the group, with material co-written by Kodo and their guests, the resulting album is a bit different from previous recordings. And hearing percussionists such as **AIRTO MOREIRA, GIOVANNI HIDALGO**, and **ZAKIR HUSSAIN** playing against the extreme dynamics Kodo is famous for is a thrill. (Red Ink)

Moroccan Gnawa musician Hassan Hakmoun's *The Gift* embraces a pop sensibility while retaining his traditional roots. The result? Imagine a Moroccan Peter Gabriel. **AUBREY DAYLE**'s percussion playing is appropriately styled, keeping things light yet grooving, punctuating the songs in just the right places. (Triloka Records)

Bhangra is a fusion of traditional Indian folk music and DJ culture. *Bhangra Beatz* is a compilation that presents some of the top acts recorded for Kiss Records in the UK. The mix of the dohl and DJ beats creates a unique feel, and this collection makes for a great source of the new flavors and grooves. (Naxos World)

Martin Patmos

8 Jonah Smith Industry Rule
7 Sveti Live Kolach

Drummer **MARKO DJORDJEVIC** has recently appeared on two wildly different albums. Sophisticated and soulful, vocalist/keyboardist Jonah Smith comes about as close to a neo-Steely Dan musical mentality as you can imagine, with hip-hop, funk, blues, and jazz variations. Marko plays tastefully and creatively throughout, his mean drum 'n' bass groove on the brief "Tone" indicating he's up on the current scene. Djordjevic's own project, Sveti, is a complete u-turn into abstract jazz fusion. Marko stretches, bends, and takes things way out on this exhausting, exploratory notes-fest. There's no denying it, the guy's got chops! (www.jonahsmith.com, www.svetimarko.com)

Mike Haid

6 Buffalo Daughter I (Emperor Norton)

What raises style-hoppers Buffalo Daughter above accusations of pretentiousness is their sense of humor, taste, and…well…the fact that they're really *good* at this stuff. In the past, their new wave/samba/sampler-rock conglomeration was startling; here the jumps are less drastic, though still fun to witness. "Earth Punk Rockers" is a rare successful appropriation of Led Zeppelin's monstrous "Kashmir" filtered through Martha & The Muffins; drummer **KIN-ICHI MOTEGI** nails it here. On "Volcanic Girl" Motegi comes through again, with some totally rad fills. Elsewhere, **ATSUSHI MATSUSHITA** follows the Lush-like "Mirror Ball" politely and plays it straight on the opener, "Ivory." /might not represent a home run for Buffalo Daughter, but in this-here park we're pretty happy with a ground-rule double.

Adam Budofsky

6 Ronnie Engel Phalse Color And.... (Performance Tectonic Laboratory)

RONNIE ENGEL merges percussion with electronic processing to create a series of interesting soundscapes, performed and recorded in real time. "Patina, Ghost And Dream" is meditative, with cavernous-sounding spaces made by processing a gong. On the standout track "Pluto's Absence" the range of sounds coming from a processed ghatam are staggering. A steel milk can and a riq are some of the other instruments subjected to Engel's sonic treatments. Although the album sounds a little monotonous after a while, it is a fascinating example of what electronics can do for percussion. www.ronnieengel.com

Martin Patmos

8 Queens Of The Stone Age Songs For The Deaf (Interscope)

It's not like **DAVE GROHL** hasn't been playing drums much lately. Between Foo Fighters and last year's *Tenacious D*, he's kept his chops up. But *Songs For The Deaf* is a real basher showcase; no wonder he dropped everything to tour behind it. The tunes are great, bursting with thick riffs and punky attitude, and made memorable by spitfire vocals, gripping hooks, and wry humor. After recent hangs with the surviving members of Queen, Grohl takes a tip here from Roger Taylor's classic dry, thuddy drum sound. Check out "Song For The Dead" to hear the stuff rock dreams are made of.

Michael Parillo

8 Susie Ibarra Songbird Suite (Tzadik)

SUSIE IBARRA's *Songbird Suite* opens with the joyful "Azul," where slapping brushes ground the violin and piano of her trio as they swirl out before coming back in to close the tune. Ibarra then conjures a mysterious atmosphere with space, skittering figures, and subtle strikes around the kit during the title track. The solo "Trance #1" demonstrates Susie's integration of exotic percussion with the drumset, while on "Trance #2" and "Trance #3" she interacts with special guest **Ikue Mori's** electronics. Abstract yet accessible, Ibarra shows herself as an interesting composer as well as a drummer with exceptional technique and imagination.

Martin Patmos

9 Box Car Racer Box Car Racer (MCA)

Sometimes you just have to show it all off and gloat, especially if you feel creatively restricted, as did Blink-182's **TRAVIS BARKER**. So along with B-182 guitarist/vocalist Tom DeLonge, the duo assembled a more experimental, serious-minded project, Box Car Racer. With the extra latitude afforded him, Barker shines like never before—seamless 16th/32nd-note shifts, driving tribal tom patterns, and just-perfect cymbal tinkles are all over this stylistic mixed bag of thirteen tracks. We always knew Barker was a pretty great punk drummer, but we never really knew *how* great—until now.

Waleed Rashidi

8 Arch Enemy Wages Of Sin (Century Media)

Over the years, there's been a dearth of female death metal crooners. But **Angela Gossow**, the new vocalist for Sweden's Arch Enemy, more than makes up for it. In fact, on vicious and extremely infectious tunes like "Enemy Within" and "Burning Angel," Gossow out-roars most of her male compatriots in the genre. And throughout Arch Enemy's fourth album, drummer **DANIEL ERLANDSSON** provides a massively precise and creative framework for the double-barreled guitar attack of ex-Carcass shred-king **Michael Amott** and his bro **Christopher**. On the dynamic "Heart Of Darkness" and "Ravenous," Erlandsson's dynamic and ultra-tasteful chops breathe new life into death metal drumming—and drumming in general. **Jeff Perlah**

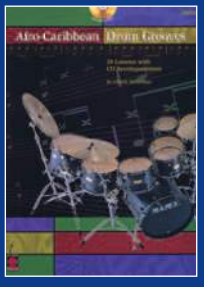
9 Greg Osby Inner Circle (Blue Note)

Altoist/leader Greg Osby's splendidly strange compositions keep us in suspense until the final notes. On *Inner Circle*, drummer **ERIC HARLAND** further cements his rep as an important anchor on the forefront of acoustic jazz. There are echoes of Tony Williams in his fluid, deft touch, as well as startling independence. But his biggest assets are his satellite-dish ears. In this 1999 session, jagged melodies, alien harmonies, and irregular phrases abound. Yet Harland makes the loopy puzzle breathe and sing. On paper, this music *should* be annoyingly mathematical. But Harland and mates transform the cerebral into something surprisingly enjoyable. **Jeff Potter**

BOOKS

8 Afro-Caribbean Drum Grooves by Chuck Silverman (Cherry Lane)

level: intermediate to advanced, $14.95 (with CD)



Performer/educator Silverman consistently hits the mark with books and videos that are authentic, contemporary, and hip—but most important, vastly practical. Featured grooves here include songo, Mozambique, cha cha cha, 6/8 studies, bossa, samba, baião, and cáscara variations. The CD contains drumset demonstrations and play-along cuts with percussion and sequenced tracks. There are more in-depth Afro-Caribbean volumes on the market, but Silverman delivers a lean, mean, and focused book. And at the price, it's a steal. You'll find plenty of keeper grooves here, whether shedding for a fusion jam or just spicing your bossa for the weekend wedding gig. **Jeff Potter**

7 Swing Shift Drum Set Duet by Michael LaRosa (Somers Music)

level: intermediate, $8

7 Latin March Percussion Trio by Michael LaRosa (Somers Music)

level: beginner, $9

Swing Shift is a five-minute duet for two drumsets in 4/4 time (quarter note = 168). The parts are written in a swing style and are carefully notated in a score format. A few sections have rhythms written on one line with instructions to realize the notes around the set (as one would in a big band chart). Sometimes rhythms are split between the two drummers, sometimes one keeps time while the other plays the "rhythmic melody," and sometimes both play in unison. A challenging way to practice drumset chops *and* ensemble skills at the same time.

LaRosa's *Latin March* is a trio piece that could be played by youngsters or those of any age learning to read. Utilizing nothing more complex than 16th notes and a few rolls, the piece calls for snare and bongos (player one), wood block, tom-toms, and suspended cymbal (player two), and floor tom, closed hi-hat, and suspended cymbal (player three). The piece, which is designed to sound like it's being played by one advanced drumset player, allows three drummers to learn rhythms and musical skills in a fun way. **Lauren Vogel Weiss**

DVDS

9 Classic Jazz Drummers: Swing And Beyond (Hudson Music)

level: all, $29.95

Classic Jazz Drummers is an excellent collection of solos and breaks from several important jazz drummers. A soloist like **PAPA JO JONES** has to be seen to be believed, and bits of history like the **BABY DODDS** film are priceless. Seeing these masters in action can't help but deepen one's appreciation of drumming. For this DVD version (the video was reviewed in the August 2001 *MD*), Hudson has added bonus clips and a photo gallery. Clips include **SHELLY MANNE** trading with his group, **LIONEL HAMPTON** with a cocktail set, and a must-see **PHILLY JOE JONES** solo. The photo gallery offers additional visuals of drummers featured in the video. While more background on the performances would be nice, and some obvious names are missing, the history and drumming technique compiled here make this a treasure. **Martin Patmos**

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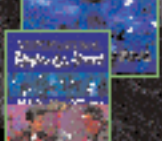

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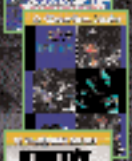

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New Orleans JazzFest 2002

April 25 through May 5 marked New Orleans JazzFest 2002. True to form, the music at the festival and around the city offered some of the most satisfying drumming to be heard anywhere in the world. Featured drummers included internationally known jazz veterans and New Orleans–based superstars. One highlight was an appearance by the legendary Earl Palmer, who was in town for a reunion of the seminal "Studio Band," *the* New Orleans R&B ensemble of the 1950s. And on the other end of the time line, nine-year-old Ryan Batiste also performed, representing the next generation of New Orleans groovemasters.

Also performing were dozens of regional and local drumming notables, offering an amalgam of R&B, jazz, blues, zydeco, gospel, Cajun, Cuban, rock, and world beat music. These included Johnny Vidacovich (playing with his own trio and displaying equal skills no matter the musical context), Herlin Riley (Wynton Marsalis), Jeffery "Jellybean" Alexander (The Absolute Monster Gentlemen), Gerald French (Sista Teedy), Troy Davis (Terence Blanchard), Adonis Rose (Nicholas Payton), Shannon Powell, Jason Marsalis, and June Gardner.

Paul Siegel

Left to right, from top: Albert "Tootie" Heath (The Heath Brothers), Jazz star Louis Hayes, Terrance Higgins (Dirty Dozen Brass Band), Brian Blade (with Wayne Shorter and John Patitucci), Willie Green (The Neville Brothers), Funk legend Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste, Billy Hart (David Murray), New Orleans music specialist Ricky Sebastian, Russell Batiste (The Funky Meters), Ryan Batiste

International Custom & Vintage Drum Show

For the past twelve years, the highlight of the summer for Midwestern drum enthusiasts has been the International Custom & Vintage Drum Show. The 2002 edition was held May 18 and 19 at the Kane County Fairgrounds in St. Charles, Illinois, some forty miles outside Chicago.

The brainchild of Rob Cook, owner of Rebeats Vintage Drum Products in Alma, Michigan, this year's edition of the so-called "Chicago Show" drew some seven hundred attendees, as well as fifty exhibitors from fifteen states and Canada. It filled two rooms of a massive, hangar-like structure with beautifully restored drumsets from the '40s, '50s, and '60s—and, in some cases, much earlier. And as a special treat, on the Monday after the show, Rob Cook led a tour of some of Illinois' most famous drum sites, including the former Slingerland, Ludwig, and Deagan plants.

One of the most interesting developments of this year's show was the changing definition of the word "vintage." For younger drummers who fell in love with the instrument in the '70s or '80s, the sets of that era now hold the sort of vivid fascination that fuels avid collecting. Of special interest were some of the odder or more distinctive "experiments" in drum manufacturing, like clear Plexiglas shells (which are experiencing a new boom in popularity) and oddly shaped kits such as those manufactured by North and Trixon.

Though I was there as a journalist, I couldn't help but don my collector's hat about a half-hour before the show closed on Sunday. I got a *great* deal on one of the short-lived Ludwig stainless steel sets from the late '70s. (Sorry, Honey; I was surrounded by all those vintage drums, and I just couldn't resist!)

Jim DeRogatis

Photo 1: This unique mottled-finish Slingerland set was manufactured at the company's original factory in Niles, Illinois. Photo 2: "Vintage" is acquiring a new meaning. Here, Dean Embrich from Deanz Drums of River Edge, New Jersey displays some "classic" electronic drums from the mid-'80s. Photo 3: Dave Strange of Fulton, Mississippi got a lot of compliments (and plenty of surprised queries) about this interestingly shaped mid-'60s gold sparkle drumset from Germany's Trixon. Photo 4: Rockford, Illinois native Bun E. Carlos is a fixture at "the Chicago show." This is his famous red, white, and blue sparkle Rogers set. Photo 5: Hook 'em when they're young! This cool toy set surely made some kid's morning when he found it under the Christmas tree circa 1965. Photo 6: Ludwig's nesting Standard line was intended as affordable entry-level drums for students. No less an authority than Bill Ludwig II told owner John Knox of Hebron, Illinois that he was surprised to see this set at a collector's show. But that didn't mean the drums weren't Ludwig quality. And how 'bout that great orange wave finish?

Ultimate Drummer's Weekend

The biggest drum event in the Southern Hemisphere is the Ultimate Drummer's Weekend, which has been held for the past ten years in Melbourne, Australia. The 2002 version, held June 8–10, featured over sixty performances in concert and workshop settings, as well as a product expo that allowed attendees to try out all the latest gear.

Organizer Frank Corniola (founder of Drumtek, the premier drum shop and school in Melbourne) invited a wide array of players to the three-day event. Sabian, Premier, and Drumtek were the major event sponsors, with companies such as Vater, Tama, Pearl, Zildjian, Yamaha, DW, LP, Roland, Vic Firth, Audix, and Gretsch involved as well.

Saturday began with workshops from Joe Bergamini and Dom Famularo, both of whom performed to packed houses. The afternoon in the theater was kicked off by Graham Morgan and his big band, followed by Italian drummer Elyan Fernova and Australian mainstays Todd Byrnes, Gordon Rytmeister, and the amazing David Jones. The day was closed by master percussionist Luis Conte and a tour-de-force homecoming by Virgil Donati.

A stellar lineup Down Under

Sunday started with workshops from Luis Conte and John Tempesta. Later concert appearances included Darryn Farrugia & Logic, Mike Richards, Sam Aliano, Damian Corniola, Dom Famularo (who brought the house down with his solo and humor), and Dave Weckl with his band (in rare form).

Dom Famularo and Virgil Donati

Monday was kicked off by Virgil Donati and Dave Weckl in standing-room-only workshops. Then came a surprise-filled concert that featured Gerry Pantazis, Andrew Gander, Grant Collins, John Tempesta, and a jaw-dropping performance by the Vorticity power trio—Virgil Donati, guitarist Frank Gambale, and bassist Tom Kennedy. Two highlights of the day were "Dom Famularo & Friends," which featured Weckl, Donati, Famularo, Bergamini, Collins, Aliano, and others on stage together in a fun-filled improvised ensemble, and the Drumtek Band Of Drummers—a rousing finale consisting of two hundred student drummers conducted by Roby Corelli.

Many of the performers appeared in the expo to demo gear and sign autographs. In addition, a nationwide Australian drum contest exposed many of the fine up-and-coming players in that country. The entire event was filled to capacity each day, underscoring the state of the drumming industry in Australia. Watch for a DVD of the Ultimate Drummer's Weekend 2002 coming later this year from Hal Leonard and Vorticity.

Joe Bergamini

Quick Beats

Samantha Maloney (Hole/Mötley Crüe)

What are some of your favorite grooves?
There are tons, but the ones I keep coming back to are Phil Collins on "Behind The Lines" (Genesis), "Hand In Hand," "I Missed Again," and "Inside Out," the great Jeff Porcaro on "Hold The Line," "Georgy Porgy," and "Rosanna" (Toto), Steve Gadd on "Aja" (Steely Dan), John Bonham on "Immigrant Song" (Led Zeppelin), and *any* Earth, Wind & Fire groove.

What are you listening to in your car, and what are you driving?
The Gap Band's *Greatest Hits*, Sasha's *Live From Gatecrasher*, Basement Jaxx, my own music, and a dancehall reggae compilation. I drive a white BMW.

If you could put an imaginary super band together, who would be in it?
Seal, PJ Harvey, Phil Collins, Bjork, and me, of course!

What's your favorite TV theme music?
I'm a sucker for TV theme music. I have about eight CD compilations. I can tell you the song I hate the most—the *Doogie Howser* theme.

In Memoriam

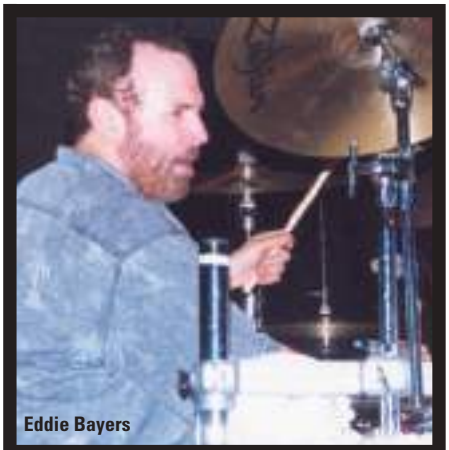
David Rankin

David Rankin, drummer for the Maine-based band 6 Gig, died unexpectedly in his Portland apartment on May 27, 2002. He was thirty-one.

David was a very talented self-taught drummer, guitarist, and songwriter. He had recently returned with 6 Gig from California, where they had just finished *Mind Over Mind*, the follow-up to their *Tincan Experiment* LP, which is to be released this summer. 6 Gig has toured the USA with such bands as Godsmack, Disturbed, Mudvayne, Fu Manchu, Speedealer, Orgy, and The Goo Goo Dolls. They also contributed their song "Hit The Ground" to the soundtrack of *National Lampoon's Van Wilder*.

Chad Brandolini

Nashville NAMM Show Performances


Eddie Bayers

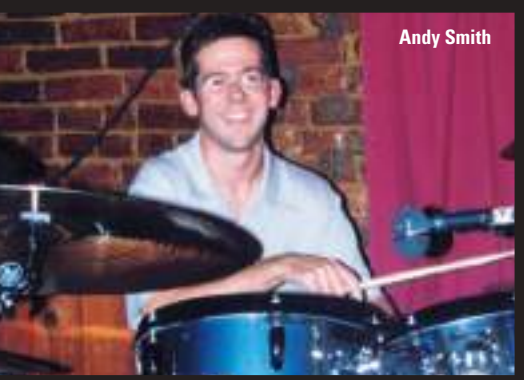
Lalo Davida

Jen Lowe

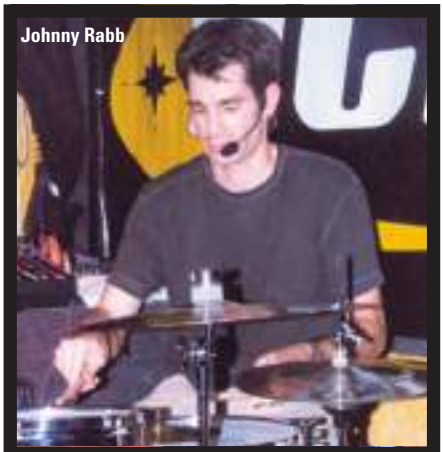
Part of the fun of the Nashville Summer NAMM trade show is the playing that goes on after hours in "Music City, USA." At this year's show, *Modern Drummer* joined with Pearl to present a night of hot salsa music by timbalero Lalo Davida's band, with Andy Smith on drums and guest star Richie Flores on congas. The show was opened by Australian drumming phenom Grant Collins, who wowed everyone with his solo drum compositions and blazing technique (including a rendition of "The Three Camps" played with his *feet*).

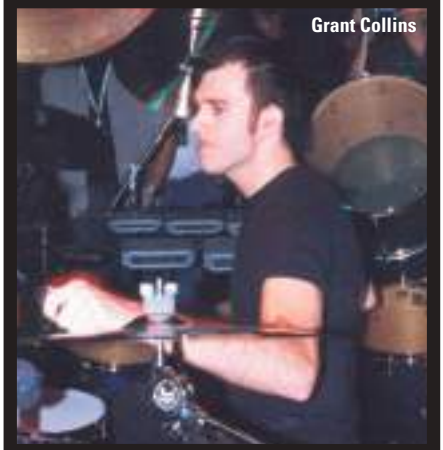
Johnny Rabb's techno trio TK3 (featuring Chris Patterson on steel drums and percussion and Jerry Navarro on bass) delivered a blistering set at Nashville hot spot The Tin Roof (sponsored by johnnyraBB drumsticks, DW, Audix, Evans, and Meinl). Opening for Johnny's group was up-and-coming Atlanta band Acres, featuring drummer (and *MD* author) Art Thompson and percussionist Jen Lowe. Art and Jen were featured in November 2001's *On The Move*.

Shure Microphones celebrated NAMM and the opening of Shure's new Nashville office at the same time. Their party featured studio great Eddie Bayers and a band of crack Nashville session players.

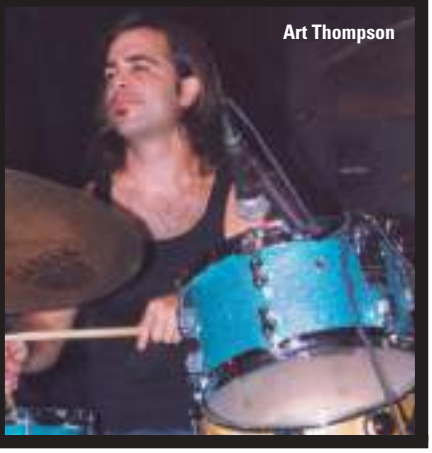

Andy Smith

Chris Patterson


Johnny Rabb


Grant Collins

Richie Flores


Art Thompson

Who's Playing What

Bob Siebenberg

Guy Hoffman

Future Man

New Regal Tip endorsers include **Bob Siebenberg**, **Guy Hoffman**, and **Roy "Future Man" Wooten**. Bob Siebenberg is the original drummer with Supertramp and has been with the band for twenty-seven years. Guy Hoffman first found acclaim with well-known Milwaukee band The BoDeans, and then as a member of Violent Femmes. Future Man is an inventor, scientist, musician, composer, and two-time Grammy Award–winning performer with Bela Fleck & The Flecktones.

Julio Figueroa is now playing DW drums.

Ayotte Drums has welcomed drummer **Mel Gaynor** of Simple Minds to its artist roster. The band recently released its first studio set in four years (featuring the single "Cry") and has been on tour worldwide.

Roli Garcia Jr. is a Pearl endorser.

Will Hunt has joined the roster of Evans performing artists. Will's band Skrape toured on the Extreme Steel tour with Pantera and Slayer last year. More recently, Will has been hitting the skins as a member of The Tommy Lee Band.

Stage and studio journeyman **Tony Braunagel** is endorsing AKG microphones.

Matt Savage

Marching and rudimental drumming specialist **Matt Savage** has become a Pro-Mark drumstick artist. Matt is the author of the acclaimed *Savage Rudimental Workshop*.

Audix has announced an endorsement relationship with legendary studio/R&B drummer **Bernard "Pretty" Purdie**. Bernard has recorded with Marvin Gaye, James Brown, The Jackson Five, Gladys Knight, Aretha Franklin, Hall & Oates, Paul Simon, Michael Bolton, Joe Cocker, and Steely Dan.

Cryptopsy Drummer **Flo Mounier** is a new Vic Firth artist.

Meinl has welcomed UK percussionist, musician, singer, songwriter, composer, arranger, and dancer **Teena Lyle** as the latest addition to their artist roster. Teena has worked with artists such as Bonn, Van Morrison, Steve Winwood, Maceo Parker, Kim Wilde, Boy George, Paul Young, and Johnny Lee Hooker.

New Vater drumstick endorsers include **Sammy J. Watson** (The Apex Theory), **Dave Allen** (Michelle Branch), **La Dell Abrams** (Usher), **Chris Hesse** (Hoobastank), **Jean Paul Gaster** (Clutch), **Todd Hennig** (Death By Stereo), **Brian Pearia** (Mesh), **Joe Russo** (Fat Mama), **Timothy Horton** (Kool & The Gang), **Brad Corrigan** (Dispatch), **Mat Young** (Original Sinners), **Andru Dykes**, **Andols Herrick** (Chimaira), and **Russell Batiste Jr.** (The Funky Meters).

Sammy J. Watson

Montreal Drum Fest Lineup

The tenth-anniversary Montreal Drum Fest will present a selection of audience favorites from previous shows. Included will be Steve Smith, Marco Minnemann, Paul DeLong, Rick Gratton, Santana's Raul Rekow and Karl Perazzo, Paul Brochu, Rayford Griffin, Walfredo Reyes Jr., Tony Royster Jr., Thomas Lang, and more. Another important feature at this year's show will be a tribute to the many sponsors who have presented the great performers in the past nine years.

Dates for the Montreal Drum Fest 2002 are November 8 through 10. For further information, check out www.montrealdrumfest.com.

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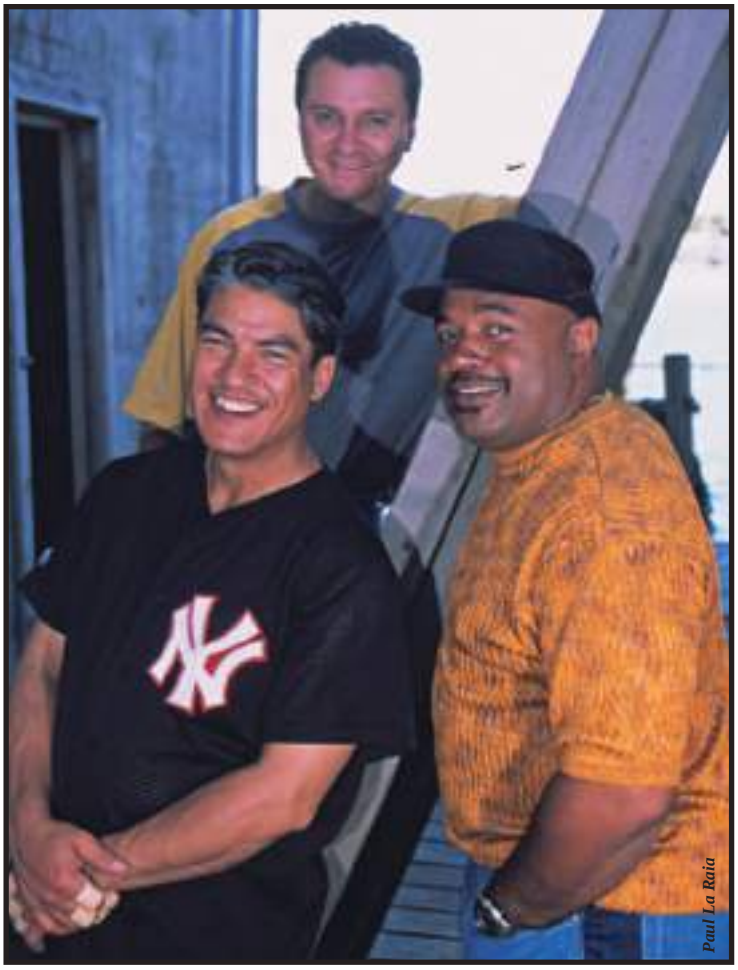
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A Tribute To Keith

Not long ago, Brian Whicker of Hampton, New Hampshire read a book about Keith Moon called *Dear Boy* (by Tony Fletcher). Inspired by the book, along with his own admiration of The Who's legendary drummer, Brian was motivated to create a kit similar to Moonie's famous "Pictures Of Lilly" drumset.

Brian's set consisted of a five-piece late-'70s Premier kit, along with a second bass drum and tom. Shortly before undertaking this project, Brian had refinished the kit in gloss black. So he had the perfect background on which to add the decorative panels needed to create the "Lilly" image. He created those panels on computer, printed them on glossy photo paper, and carefully placed each one on the drums using spray adhesive. Several coats of clear gloss locked the panels within a thick, hard shell against each drumshell. Caught up in the mood, Brian then purchased a 1970s-vintage 5x14 Ludwig Supraphonic snare, similar to the drum that Moon favored. The finished kit consists of two 24" bass drums, two 16" floor toms, 10", 12", and 14" rack toms, and 5x14 Premier and Ludwig snare drums. All hardware is Premier from Brian's original kit, and the cymbals are Zildjian.

Brian's kit is not meant to be an exact copy. For instance, to the panel that originally said, "Keith Moon Patented British Exploding Drummer," he added, "In Memory Of." And instead of The Who's logo in the pink panel, he placed his nickname, "Wicka." Sizes of the rack toms and some other details also differ from the original. Says Brian, "This project is my own tribute to a man whose musicianship, showmanship, and persona influenced so many (and continue to do so). In a larger sense, it is intended to celebrate what all four members of The Who have given us. This is especially important since the recent passing of John Entwistle. He and Keith are both sorely missed. But with the two of them back together again, the Hereafter will certainly rock like it never has before."

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Drumkit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.

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